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# MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

## ITS HEROES AND LEGENDS

COMPILED BY DIANE L. HAMM

ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

D101.2:M59/9

FLARE

# Military Intelligence: Its Heroes and Legends

Compiled by Diane L. Hamm

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*Dedicated to the men and women of military intelligence whose deeds and sacrifice, although cloaked in the veil of secrecy, have played an indispensable role in supporting the U.S. Army and safeguarding the Nation.*

# Foreword

The modern intelligence war is characterized by large, seemingly ever expanding bureaucracies and increasingly sophisticated technologies. In this environment, it is easy to overlook the contribution of the military intelligence specialist. Yet, during the 200-year history of our Nation and its army, more times than not, intelligence and counterintelligence breakthroughs have occurred as a result of the initiative of a single individual. The establishment of the Military Intelligence Corps on July 1, 1987 and its symbolic recognition of the military intelligence professional as an important member of the Army team seems a fitting occasion to celebrate the role of the individual soldier.

The subjects of many of the stories are names easily recognizable, legends within the annals of military intelligence; others tell of events known only to a few and long since forgotten. Many of the stories cannot be verified as they were told through the eyes of the participants themselves and may not even be historically accurate in every detail. However, each of the stories was selected because it captured the human spirit—men and women who undertook personal risks and endured hardships and sufferings for Duty, Honor, Country. Although they did not always achieve success, their actions remain an inspiration to all and an important part of the heritage of today's military intelligence professionals.

James L. Gilbert
Command Historian
U.S. Army Intelligence and
Security Command
1 October 1987

# Preface

This anthology is being published in observance of the activation of the MI Corps and the 25th anniversary of the MI Branch. The 13 stories reflect the major disciplines of military intelligence, and each story is told against a backdrop of a critical period in our Nation's history. The primary purpose of this book is to capture the adventures and accomplishments of military intelligence specialists through the years and to ensure that the military intelligence community is aware of its rich heritage.

Particulary important is that the professionalism of the military intelligence men and women and their outstanding dedication and commitment to providing the best support possible to the U.S. Army and the Nation be recognized at this time. Hopefully, these stories which tell of patriotism and love of country will foster the esprit de corps and morale of military intelligence specialists of yet another generation. My only regret is that the collection must exclude, out of necessity, so many other tales of valor and human interest.

A special recognition is given to Colonel R.M. Bowe, USAINSCOM Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, and the DDCSOPS, Colonel Lance R. Cornine, for their unending support; and to my colleagues Mr. James L. Gilbert, Command Historian, and Dr. John P. Finnegan, staff historian, for their encouragement and suggestions.

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Diane L. Hamm
1 October 1987

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# "How I Carried the Message to Garcia"

*By Colonel Andrew S. Rowan*

"Where," asked President McKinley, "where can I find a man who will carry a message to Garcia?"

"There is a young officer here in Washington; a lieutenant named Rowan, who will carry it for you!" replied Colonel Arthur Wagner, head of the Bureau of Military Intelligence.

"Send him!" was the President's order.

It was the spring of 1898, the United States faced possible war with Spain, and the President was anxious for information. He realized that success meant that the U.S. forces must cooperate with the Cuban insurgents. He understood that it was essential to know how many Spanish troops there were on the island, their quality and condition, their morale, the character of their officers—especially those of the high command; the state of the roads in all seasons; the sanitary situation in both the Spanish and insurgent armies and the country in general; how well both sides were armed and what the Cuban forces would need in order to harass the enemy while American battalions were being mobilized; and the topography of the country and many other important facts.

It was perhaps an hour later when Colonel Wagner came to me to ask me to meet him at the Army and Navy club for lunch at 1 o'clock. As we were eating, the colonel—who had, by the way, a reputation for being an inveterate joker—asked me, "When does the next boat leave for Jamaica?"

Thinking he was making an effort to perpetrate one of his pleasantries, and determined to thwart him, if possible, I excused myself for a minute or so and when I had returned informed him that the Adirondack, of the Atlas Line, a British boat; would sail from New York the next day, April 9.

"Can you take the boat?" snapped the colonel. "Young man," he continued, "you have been selected by the President to

communicate with—or rather, to carry a message to—General Garcia who will be found somewhere in the eastern part of Cuba. Your problem will be to secure from him information of a military character, bring it down to date and arrange it on a working basis. Your message to him will be in the nature of a series of inquiries from the President. Written communication, further than is necessary to identify you, will be avoided. History has furnished us with the record of too many tragedies to warrant taking risks.... There must be no failure on your part; there must be no errors made in this case." By this time I was fully alive to the fact that Colonel Wagner was not joking.

"Means will be found," he continued, "to identify you in Jamaica, where there is a Cuban junta. The rest depends on you. You require no further instructions than those I will now give you," which he did, they being essentially as outlined in the opening paragraphs. "You will need the afternoon for preparation. Quartermaster General Humphreys will see that you are put ashore at Kingston. After that, providing the United States declares war on Spain, further instructions will be based on cables received from you. Otherwise everything will be silence. You must plan and act for yourself. The task is yours and yours only. You must get to Garcia. Your train leaves at midnight. Goodbye and good luck!" We shook hands. As Colonel Wagner released mine he repeated: "Get that message to Garcia!"

Hastily, I set about to make my preparations. I considered my situation. My duty was, as I understood it, complicated by the fact that a state of war did not exist, nor would it exist at the time of my departure; possibly not until after my arrival in Jamaica. A false step might bring about a condition that a lifetime of statements would never explain. Should war be declared my mission would be simplified, although its dangers would not be lessened.

The *Adirondack* left on time and the voyage was without special incident. It was when the ship entered Cuban waters that I first realized danger. I had but one incriminating paper, a letter from the State Department to officials in Jamaica saying that I was what I might represent myself to be. But if war had been declared before the *Adirondack* entered Cuban waters she would have been liable to search by Spain, under the rules of international law. As I was contraband and the bearer of contraband I could have

been seized as a prisoner of war and taken aboard any Spanish ship, while the British boat, after compliance with specified preliminaries, could have been sunk, despite the fact that she left a peaceful port under a neutral flag, bound for a neutral port, prior to a declaration of war. Recalling this state of affairs, I hid the paper in the life preserver in my stateroom, and it was with great relief when I saw the cape astern.

Upon reaching Jamaica, I cypher-cabled Washington of my arrival and then sought out Mr. Lay, head of the Cuban junta; and with him and his aids, began plans of how to reach Garcia.

On April 20, news was received that the United States had given Spain until the 23d to agree to surrender Cuba to the Cubans and to withdraw her armed forces from the island and her navy from its waters. On April 23, I received a coded message from Washington in reply to my earlier cable: "Join Garcia as soon as possible!"

After its receipt I went to the headquarters of the junta where I was expected. There were a number of exiled Cubans present whom I had not met before and we were conversing on general topics when a carriage drove up. "It is time!" someone exclaimed in Spanish.

Without further discussion, I was led to the vehicle and took a seat inside. Then began one of the strangest rides ever taken by a soldier on duty or off. My driver proved to be most uncommunicative. He spoke not to me, nor heeded me when I spoke to him. The instant I was shut in, he started through the maze of Kingston's streets at a furious pace. On and on he drove, never slackening speed, and soon we had passed the suburbs and were beyond all habitants. I knocked, kicked, but he gave no heed.

He seemed to understand that I was carrying a message to Garcia and that it was his part to get me over the first "leg" of the journey as speedily as possible. So, after several futile efforts to make him listen to me, I decided to let matters take their course and settled back in my seat.

Four miles farther, through a dense growth of tropical trees, we flew along the broad and level Spanish Town road, until at the edge of the jungle we halted. The door of the cab was opened, a strange face appeared, and I was invited to transfer to another carriage that was waiting.

But the strangeness of it all was the order in which everything appeared to be arranged! Not an unnecessary word was indulged in, not a second of time was wasted. A minute later and again I was on my way.

The second driver, like the first, was dumb. He declined all efforts made to get him in conversation, contenting himself by putting his horses to as swift a pace as possible. So on we went up the valley of the Cobre River to the backbone of the island where the road ran down to the ultramarine waters of the Caribbean at St. Ann's Bay.

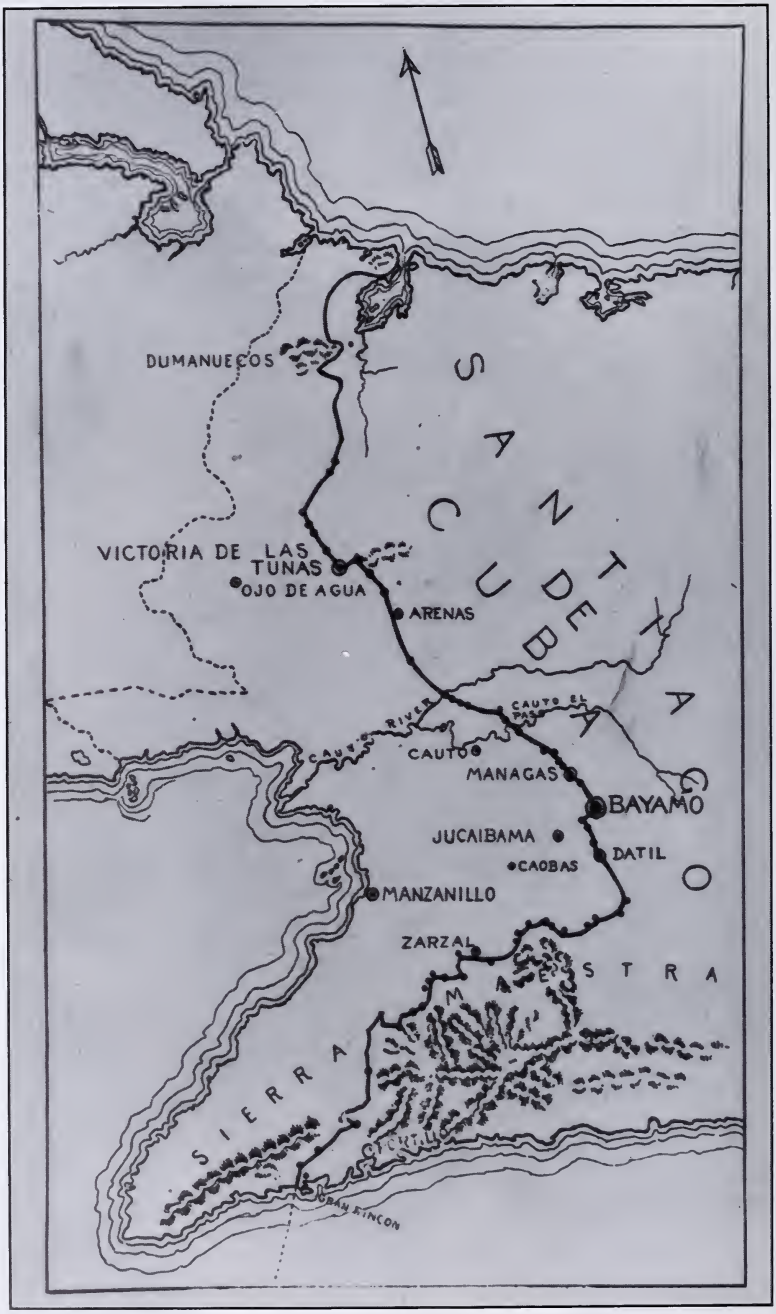
My carriage stopped. Men appeared as if they had sprung from the ground. I was surrounded by a party of men armed to the teeth. I had no fear of being intercepted on British soil by Spanish soldiers, but these abrupt halts were getting on my nerves because action by the Jamaica authorities would mean the failure of the mission; and if the Jamaica authorities had been notified that I was violating the neutrality of the island, I would not be allowed to proceed. What if these men were English soldiers! But my feelings were soon relieved. A whispered parley and we were away again!

In about an hour we halted in front of a house outlined by feeble lights within. Supper awaited. The first thing offered me was a glass of Jamaica rum. I do not recall that I was tired, although we had traveled about 70 miles in approximately 9 hours with two relays, but I do know that the rum was welcomed.

Following came introductions. From an adjoining room came a tall, wiry, determined-looking man, with a fierce moustache, one of his hands minus a thumb; a man to tie to in an emergency, to trust at any time. His eyes were honest, loyal eyes that mirrored a noble soul. He was a Peninsula Spaniard who had gone to Cuba, where at Santiago he quarreled with the rule of Old Spain, hence the missing thumb and exile. He was Gervacio Sabio and he was charged with seeing that I was guided to General Garcia for the delivery of my message. The others were the men employed to get me out of Jamaica—7 miles remaining to be traveled.

Following a rest of an hour we proceeded. Fifty yards offshore, a small fishing boat rocked softly on the water. Suddenly a light flashed aboard the little craft. It must have been a timed

*Lt. Col. Andrew S. Rowan (U.S. Army photo)*


DUMANUECOS
VICTORIA DE LAS TUNAS
OJO DE AGUA
ARENAS
CAUTO RIVER
CAUTO EL PASO
CAUTO
MANAGAS
BAYAMO
JUCAIBAMA
CAOBAS
DATIL
MANZANILLO
ZARZAL
SIERRA MAESTRA
SANTIAGO DE CUBA
PUNTA GRAN ENCON

signal, for our arrival had been noiseless. Gervacio, apparently satisfied with the alertness of the crew, answered it.

Once aboard the boat I noted that it was partially filled with boulders intended for ballast. Oblong bundles indicated cargo, but not sufficient to impede progress. With Gervacio as skipper, the crew and myself, the boulders, and the bundles, there was little room for comfort.

One hundred miles to the north lay the shores of Cuba, patrolled by Spanish "lanchas," light-draft vessels armed with pivot guns of small caliber and machine guns; their crews provided with Mauser rifles far superior—as I afterward learned—to anything we had aboard. In the event of an encounter with one of these lanchas, there was little to hope for.

But I must succeed; I must find Garcia and deliver my message!

Our plan of action was to keep outside the Cuban 3-mile limit until after sunset, then to sail or row in rapidly, draw behind some friendly coral reef, and wait until morning. If we were caught, as we carried no papers, we would probably be sunk with no questions asked. Boulder-laden rafts go to bottom quickly and floating bodies tell no tales to those who find them.

It was now early morning, the air was deliciously cool and, wearied with my journey thus far, I was about to seek some rest in sleep when suddenly Gervacio gave an exclamation that brought us all to our feet. A few miles away one of the dreaded lanchas was bearing directly toward us.

A sharp command in Spanish and the crew dropped the sail.

Then all but Gervacio, who was at the helm, ducked below the gunwale. Gervacio then lunged over the tiller, keeping the boat's nose parallel with the Jamaica shore.

"He may think I am a 'lone fisherman' from Jamaica and go by us," said the coolheaded steersman.

So it proved. When within hailing distance the pert young commander of the lancha cried in Spanish:

"Catching anything?"

To which my guide responded, also in Spanish: .

"No, the miserable fish are not biting this morning!"

*Map of Rowan's route across Cuba (National Archives)*

If only that midshipman, or whatever his rank, had been wise enough to lay alongside, he surely would have "caught something," and this story would never have been written. When he had passed us and was some distance away, Gervacio ordered the sail hoisted again and turned to me remarking:

"If the senor is tired and wants sleep, he can now indulge himself for I think the danger is past."

If anything occurred during the next 6 hours, it left me undisturbed. In fact, I believed that nothing except the broiling heat of the tropical sun could have drawn me from my rocky mattress.

About 4 o'clock in the afternoon the clouds broke away and the Sierra Maestra, the master mountain range of the island, stood in the golden sunshine in all its beauteous majesty. Gervacio began taking in sail. To my question he replied:

"We are closer in than I thought. We are in the war zone of the lanchas, high seas or no high seas. We must stay well out and use the open water for all it is worth. To go closer and run the risk of being seen by the enemy is merely to run an unnecessary risk."

Hastily we overhauled the arsenal. I carried only a Smith & Wesson revolver, so I was assigned a frightful looking rifle. I might have been able to fire it once, but I doubt if it would have been of further service. The crew were provided with the same formidable weapons, while the pilot who from his seat looked after the jib—the only sail set—drew close to him the other weapons. The real serious part of my mission was now at hand. Earlier everything had been easy and comparatively safe. Now danger menaced. Grave danger. Capture meant death and my failure to carry the message to Garcia.

We were probably 25 miles from the coast, although it seemed but a span away. It was not until nearly midnight that the jib-sheet was let go, and the crew began sounding the shallow water with their oars. Then a timely roller gave us a last lift and with a mighty effort shoved us into the waters of a hidden, peaceful bay. We anchored in the darkness 50 yards off shore. I suggested that we land at once, but Gervacio replied:

"We have enemies both ashore and afloat, senor; it is better that we stay were we are. Should any lancha endeavor to pry us out she would likely land on the submerged coral reef we have

crossed and we can get ashore, and from the obscurity of the grape entanglements we can play the game."

At daybreak, we went ashore, dragging the boat to a small estuary, overturning and hiding it in the jungle. By this time a number of ragged Cubans had assembled at our landing place. Where they came from, or how they knew that our party was a friendly one, were problems to keep for me. Signals of some sort had undoubtedly been exchanged and they had come to act as burden bearers. Some of them had seen service; some of them bore the marks made by Mauser bullets.

Soon we were on the march, screened from the sea and the mountains and, indeed, from each other by the denseness of the foliage, the twists and turns of the trail, and the torrid haze that soon settled over everything. The jungle was converted into a miniature inferno by the sun, although we could not see it through the verdure. But as we left the coast and approached the foothills, the jungle began to give way to a larger and less dense growth. We soon reached a clearing where we found a few bearing coconut trees. The water, fresh and cool, drawn from the nuts, was elixir to our parched throats.

But not long did we tarry in this pleasant spot. A march of miles lay before us and a climb up steep mountain slopes to another hidden clearing must be made before nightfall. Soon we had entered the true tropical forest. Here traveling was somewhat easier for a current of air, hardly perceptible, but a current of air nevertheless, made breathing less of a task and, by far, more refreshing.

Through this forest ran the "Royal Road" from Portillor to Santiago de Cuba. As we neared this highway I noted my companions one by one disappearing in the jungle. I was soon left alone with Gervacio. Turning to him to ask a question I saw him place a finger on his lips, pointing to me to have my rifle and revolver in readiness, and then he too vanished amid the tropical growth.

I was not long in ascertaining the reason for this strange conduct. The jingle of horses' trappings, the rattling of the short sabers carried by Spanish cavalry, and occasionally a word of command fell on my ear.

I cocked my rifle and swung my Smith & Wesson into position for quick action and waited tensely for what was to follow. Every moment I expected to hear reports of firearms. But none

came and one by one the men returned, Gervacio being among the last.

"We scattered in order to deceive them in the event we had been discovered. We covered a considerable stretch of the road, and had firing been commenced, the enemy would have believed it an attack in force from ambush. It would have been a successful one too," Gervacio added with an expression of regret. "But duty first and"—here he smiled—"pleasure afterward!"

Beside the trails along which insurgent parties usually passed, it was the custom to build fires and bury sweet potatoes in the ashes. There they roasted until a hungry party should pass. We came upon one of these fires during the afternoon. A baked sweet potato was passed out to each of the party, the fire covered again, and the march resumed.

Arriving at the end of the journey for the day, I observed a number of men in a dress strange to me.

"Who are these?" I inquired.

"They are deserters from the army of Spain, senor," replied Gervacio. "They have fled from Manzanillo and they say that lack of food and harsh treatment by their officers were the reasons for their leaving."

Now a deserter is sometimes of value, but here in this wilderness I would have preferred their room to their company. Who could say that one or more of them might not leave camp at any time and warn the Spanish officials that an American was crossing Cuba, evidently bound for the camp of General Garcia? Would not the enemy make every effort to thwart him in his mission? So I said to Gervacio:

"Question these men closely and see that they do not leave camp during our stay!"

"Si, senor!" was the reply.

The instructions proved well for me and for the success of my errand. My thought that one or more deserters might leave to apprise the Spanish commander of my presence proved to be the correct one. Although it is not fair to presume that any knew my mission, my being there was sufficient to arouse the suspicions of two who proved to be spies and also nearly resulted in my assassination. These two determined to leave camp that night and plunge through the thickets to the Spanish lines with the information that an "officer Americano" was being escorted across Cuba.

I was awakened some time after midnight by the challenge of a sentinel, followed by a shot, and almost instantly a shadowy form appeared close by my hammock. I sprang up and out on the opposite side just as another form appeared, and in less time than it takes to write it, the first one had fallen as the result of a blow from a machete which cut through the bones of his right shoulder to the lung. The wretched spy lived long enough to tell us that it was agreed if his comrade failed to get out of camp, he should kill me and prevent the carrying out of whatever project I was engaged in. The sentinel shot and killed his comrade.

Horses and saddles were not available until late next day, at an hour that made it impossible to proceed. I chafed at the delay, but it could not be helped. Saddles were harder to secure than horses. I was somewhat impatient and asked Gervacio why we could not proceed without saddles.

"General Garcia is besieging Bayamo, in Central Cuba, senor," was his reply, "and we shall have to travel a considerable distance in order to reach him."

This was the reason for the search for "monturas," the saddles and trappings. One look at the steed assigned me and my admiration for the wisdom of my guide mounted rapidly and increased noticeably during the 4-day ride. Had I ridden that skeleton without a saddle it would have meant exquisite torture. However, I will say for the horse, that with his "montura" he proved a mettlesome beast, far superior to many a well-fed horse of the plains of America.

It was with great relief that after the hardest day of riding I have ever experienced we halted at a hut in the midst of a corn patch near the edge of the forest, at Jibaro. A freshly killed beef was hanging to the rafters, while the cook in the open was busy preparing a meal for the "Delegado Americano." My coming had been heralded, and my feast was to consist of fresh beef and cassava bread.

General Rios came the next morning, and with him Colonel Castillo who presented me with a Panama hat "made in Cuba." General Rios was the "the general of the coasts." He was very dark, evidently of Indian and Spanish blood, with springy, athletic step. No Spanish column ever made a sortie in his district and found him unprepared. His sources of information and his intuition were uncanny.

General Rios added 200 cavalrymen to my escort. As we marched single file, we would have presented a formidable appearance had there been anyone to see us.

I could not help observing that we were being led with remarkable skill and speed. We had entered the forest again and were hiding in the evergreen dress of the Sierra Maestra. The trail was comparatively level, but crossed at intervals by water courses with steep banks. The paths were so narrow we were constantly running afoul of tree trunks, barking our shins and dislodging the impediments from the back of our horses. Still the guide held to a steady gait that caused me to marvel. My usual position was near the center of the column, but I wanted to be near this centaur who was in the lead; and at the next water course crossing, I rode forward to observe him. He was a coal black Negro, Dionisio Lopez, a lieutenant in the Cuban army. He could trace a course through the trackless forest, through the tangled growth, as fast as he could ride. His skill with a machete was amazing. He carved a way for us through the jungle. Networks of vines fell before his steady strokes right and left; closed spaces became openings; and yet, the man appeared tireless.

The night of April 30 brought us to the Rio Buey, an affluent of the Bayamo River, about 20 miles from the city of Bayamo. Our hammocks had scarcely been swung when Gervacio appeared, his face aglow with satisfaction.

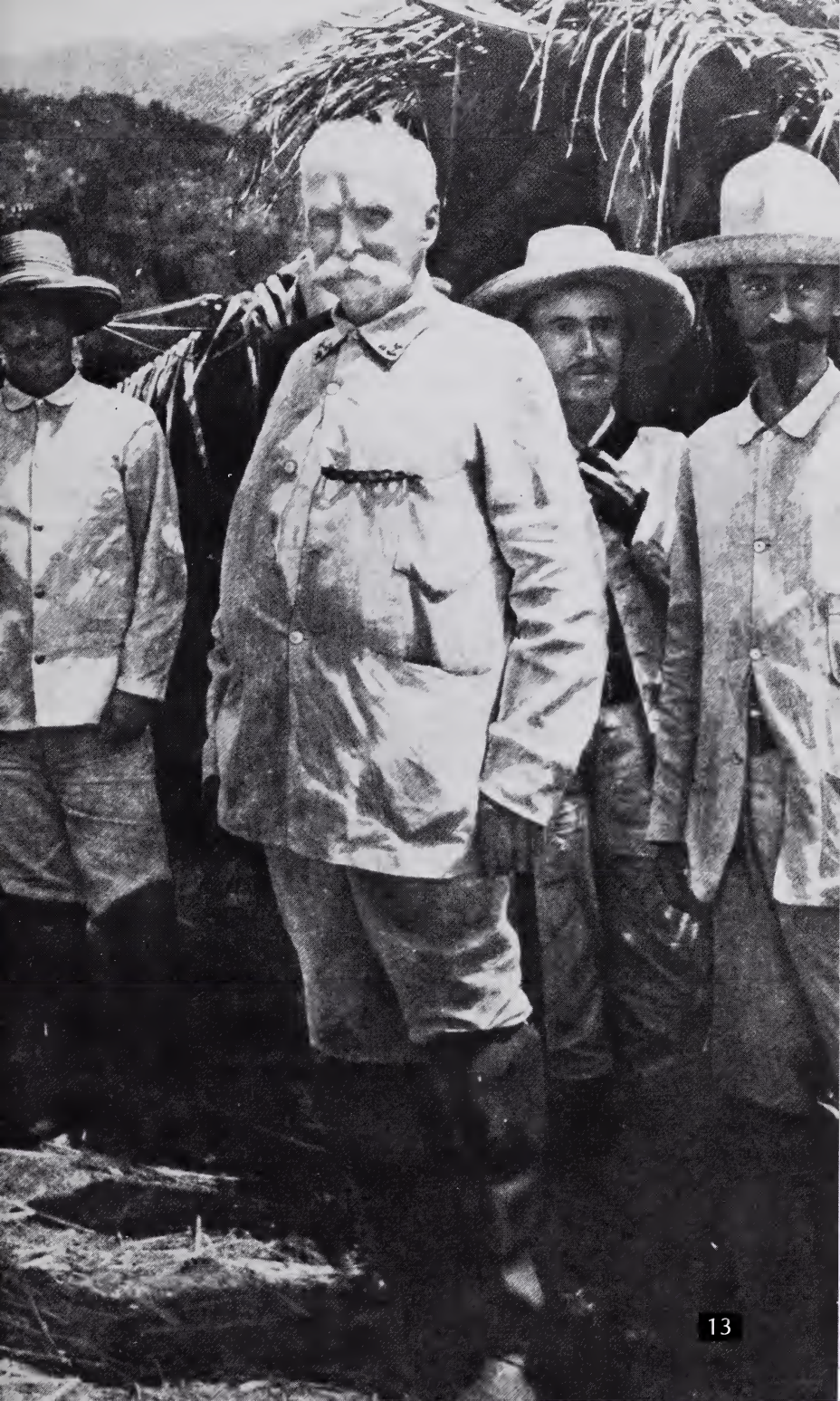
"He is there, senor! General Garcia is in Bayamo and the Spanish are in retreat down the Cauto River. Their rear guard is at Cauto-El-Embarcadero!"

So eager was I to get in communication with Garcia that I proposed a night ride, but after a conference it was decided that nothing would be gained.

Early that morning we were on our way. Soon I was in the presence of General Garcia. The long and toilsome journey with its many risks, its chances of failure, its chances of death, was over. I had succeeded.

As we arrived in front of General Garcia's headquarters the Cuban flag was hanging lazily over the door from an inclined staff. The method of reaching the presence of a man to whom one is

*Gen. Garcia and his staff (National Archives)*



accredited in such circumstances was new to me. We formed in line, dismounted together, and "stood to horse." Gervacio was known to the general, so he advanced to the door and was admitted. He returned in a short time with General Garcia who greeted me cordially and asked me to enter. The general introduced me to his staff—all in clean white uniforms and wearing side arms.

Following breakfast we proceeded to business. I explained to General Garcia that my errand was purely military in its character, that the President and the War Department desired the latest information respecting the military situation in Eastern Cuba. In short, any information which would enable the American general staff to lay out a campaign. Last, but by no means least, General Garcia's suggestions as to a plan of campaign, joint or separate, between the Cuban armies and the forces of the United States. Also I informed him my government would be glad to receive the same information respecting the Cuban forces, or as much as the general saw fit to give.

General Garcia meditated for a moment and then withdrew with all the members of his staff. About 3 o'clock the general returned and said he had decided to send three officers to the United States with me. These officers were men who had spent their lives in Cuba; were trained and tried; all knew the country, and in their particular capabilities could answer all questions likely to be propounded. The quicker the United States Government got the information the better it would be for all concerned.

He went on to explain that his men needed arms, especially artillery, important in assaulting blockhouses. In ammunition he was very short, and the many rifles of varied calibre used made it difficult to get an ample supply. He thought it might be better to rearm his men with American rifles in order to simplify that question.

General Collazo, a noted figure; Colonel Hernandez; Doctor Vieta who was familiar with the diseases of the island and the tropics generally; and two sailors, both familiar with the north coast, would go with me.

For the next 2 hours I was the recipient of an information reception. Then a final meal was served at 5 o'clock, and at its conclusion I was told that my escort was at the door. When I reached the street I was surprised not to see my former guide and companion in the column. I asked for Gervacio, and he and the others

of the contingent from Jamaica came out. Gervacio wanted to go with me, but Garcia was adamant; all were needed for service on the south coast and I was to return by the north. I expressed to the general my appreciation for the services of Gervacio and his crew. After a real Latin embrace I broke away and mounted. Three cheers rang out as we galloped northward.

I had delivered my message to Garcia!

My journey to General Garcia had been fraught with many dangers, but it was, compared with my trip back to the United States, by far an innocent ramble through a fair country. Going in there had been little to contend with, for the voyage from Jamaica had been on pleasant waters; while on the way to the Cuban commander, I had been well guarded and well guided. But war had been declared and the Spanish were alert. Their soldiers patrolled every mile of shore, their boats every bay and inlet. The great guns of their forts stood ready to speak in no uncertain tones to anyone violating the rules of warfare. To all intents and purposes I was a spy behind the enemy lines! Discovery meant death with one's face to the wall. Nor had I thought of reckoning with the angry elements of sea and air, which soon were to convince me that success is not always a matter of fair sailing.

But the effort must be made and it must be successful, otherwise my mission had been fruitless. My companions shared with me the apprehensions that naturally arose. So it was with great caution that we proceeded across Cuba, northward, going around the Spanish position at Cauto-El-Embarcadero until we came to the bottle-shaped harbor of Manati; where on the side opposite, a great fort, bristling with guns, guarded the entrance.

If only the Spanish soldiery had known of our presence! But perhaps the very audacity of our undertaking was our salvation. Who would have suspected that an enemy on a mission such as ours would select such a place from which to embark?

The boat in which we made the voyage was a cockleshell, "capacity 104 cubic feet." For sails we had gunnysacks pieced together. For rations boiled beef and water. In the craft we were to sail, and we did sail, 150 miles due north to New Providence, Nassau Island. Think of putting to sea on hostile waters, patrolled by swift, well-armed lanchas, in a vessel like that!

It was at once apparent that the boat would not hold the six of us, so Dr. Vieta was sent back to Bayamo with the escort and the horses. The remaining five of us prepared to run the gauntlet of Spanish guns and outwit Spanish gunboats with a craft not much larger than a skiff and with sails of gunnysacks!

There was a storm raging at the time we had fixed upon for our departure, and we could not venture on the water while the waves were rolling so fiercely. Yet, even in waiting there was danger! It was the time of the full moon, and should the clouds dissipate with the passing of the gale our presence might be detected.

But the fates were with us! At 11 o'clock we embarked. With only five aboard, the boat was well down in the water. The ragged clouds rushed like mad things across the face of the moon, alternately hiding and disclosing us while four tugged at the oars and a fifth steered a course. We could not see the fort as we passed, and that perhaps was the reason we were not seen; but it required no great stretch of imagination to picture the frowning muzzles of the great guns as we toiled on, expecting at any moment to hear the boom of a cannon and the scream of a shot. Our little craft reeled and tossed like an eggshell and many times we were on the point of capsizing, but our sailors knew the course, our gunnysack sails stood the test, and soon we were making headway "across the trackless green."

Weary with the unwonted toil and with nothing to break the monotony of riding first one wave crest and then another, I fell asleep sitting bolt upright.

But not for long. An immense wave hit us, nearly filling our boat with water and almost capsizing us. From that time on there was no sleep for anyone. It was bail, bail, bail the long night through. Drenched with brine, weary and worn, we were glad enough to get a glimpse of the sun as it peered through the haze on the horizon.

"Un vapor, senores!" (a steamer) cried the steersman.

A feeling of alarm agitated every heart. Suppose it should be a Spanish warship? That would mean short shrift for all of us.

"Dos vapores, tres vapores, Caramba! Doce vapores!" cried the steersman, my companions echoing his cries.

Could it be the Spanish fleet?

But no, it was the battleships of Admiral Sampson, steaming eastward to attack San Juan del Puerto Rico!

We breathed easier!

All that day we broiled and bailed, bailed and broiled. Yet no one slept or relaxed his anxious outlook. Despite the presence of the United States warships, a gunboat might have escaped their vigilance, and if so, might overtake and capture us. Night fell on five of the most tired men that ever lived. We were almost worn out with fatigue, but for us there could be no rest. With the darkness came the wind again, and with the wind the mighty waves; and again it was bail, bail, bail to keep the little vessel afloat. It was with feelings of intense relief that on the next morning, May 7, at about 10 o'clock, we sighted the Curly Keys at the southern end of Andros Islands of the Bahama group and right gladly did we land there for a brief rest.

That afternoon we overhauled a sponging schooner and soon made arrangements for a transfer. The next afternoon we were captured by quarantine officials as we turned the east end of New Providence Island and were incarcerated at Hog Island; the fiction of yellow fever in Cuba having given them the excuse.

But next day I got word to the American consul general; and on May 10, he arranged our release. May 11, the schooner *Fearless* drew near the wharf and we went aboard.

We had got in behind Florida Keys when luck deserted us. The wind went down and all day May 12 we lay becalmed, but at night a breeze came up and on the morning of May 13 we were in Key West. That night we took a train for Tampa and there boarded a train for Washington.

We arrived on schedule time, and I reported to Russell A. Alger, Secretary of War, who heard my story and told me to report to General Miles, taking General Garcia's aides with me.

I attended a meeting of the cabinet a day or so after my return in company with General Miles. At the close I received President McKinley's congratulations and thanks for the manner in which I had communicated his wishes to General Garcia and for the value of the work.

"You have performed a very brave deed!" were his last words to me, and this was the first time it had occurred to me that I

had done more than my simple duty, the duty of a soldier who "is not to reason why," but to obey his orders.

I had carried the message to Garcia.

## *The Rest of the Story:*

Even today, one still hears the phrase "To carry a message to Garcia" or a derivation of it; but how it actually became a part of our heritage is a story in itself. On February 22, 1899, the eccentric writer and publisher, Elbert Hubbard, wrote an essay entitled, "A Message to Garcia," based upon what he could recall from a newspaper article which told of Rowan's adventure. Although he greatly simplified the story and included a number of errors, such as having President McKinley personally delivering the message to Rowan, Hubbard was merely using the adventure to illustrate a point—the importance of self-initiative.

Hubbard closed his story by adding: "I have no special desire to know the detail. The point that I wish to make is this: McKinley gave Rowan a message to be delivered to Garcia; Rowan took the message and did not ask, 'Where is he at?'" The praise Hubbard wrote of Rowan's accomplishment was meant as an encouragement for all who accomplished their tasks with diligence, be they great or small. The sales of the essay exceeded all other publications of that era, apart from the Bible itself.

As for Rowan's military career following his heroic action, the mission had no consequence. Rowan retired in San Francisco in 1908 as a colonel, and without citation for his actions. In 1922 Rowan's friends, including General Nelson Miles, initiated a campaign to Congress to have a Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) awarded to Rowan for his heroism. It was at that time that Rowan broke silence and wrote the preceding story of his action-packed adventure in delivering the "Message to Garcia."

As a result of Rowan's friends' efforts and his own testimonial, Congress finally presented Rowan with the Army Distinguished Service Cross (DSC); later Cuba be-ribboned him in 1938; and

his home state, West Virginia, awarded him its own Distinguished Service Medal in 1940. In 1943, Rowan died at the age of 85.

Finally, there is the man to whom the message was delivered; General Garcia. After the war in Cuba, the general came to the United States and was welcomed as a conquering hero. However, the banquet circuit proved more dangerous to the health of the old general than guerrilla warfare in the Cuban jungle. He died in Washington, DC, on December 11, 1898.

# Deserter in the Ranks

As Sergeant Daniel Bissell, member of the 2d Connecticut Regiment of the Continental Line, stood rigidly at attention, General George Washington fastened a badge of purple silk, edged with silver lace, over Bissell's heart. Sergeant Bissell was one of only three soldiers to receive the "Purple Heart" during the War of Independence. All three were noncommissioned officers from Connecticut units. Here, however, the similarity ended. Whereas the other two had been decorated for their bravery under fire, Sergeant Bissell's award was recognition for a much different kind of heroism, one best appreciated by the honor's bestower. General Washington realized the extreme importance of military intelligence and entrusted it to none but his most intimate and personal associates. Sergeant Bissell had earned his well-deserved recognition for actions performed in deep secrecy which had led him through extreme peril and the shadow of disgrace.

Born December 30, 1754, in East Windsor, Hartford County, Connecticut, Daniel Bissell enlisted as a fifer in the 8th Connecticut Regiment on July 7, 1775. Two years later, on April 1, 1777, he reenlisted as a corporal in the 5th Connecticut Regiment. On September 1, Bissell was promoted to sergeant and transferred to the 2d Connecticut Regiment as a result of a consolidation of units. Throughout his service, Bissell demonstrated a great degree of personal courage, self-reliance, prudence, and strict integrity.

In early 1781, the stage was being set for Sergeant Bissell's greatest challenge. The year was a critical one for the hopes of the colonies if they were ever to succeed in acquiring their freedom from Great Britain, but the prospects were not bright. Morale and resources were at a low ebb in the 6-year struggle. The British forces were divided between General Clinton in New York and General Cornwallis in Virginia. Although outnumbered, Washington had successfully pursuaded the French allies to join him in a combined land and naval assault against the British

forces. But to achieve success, Washington required a number of ingredients, among them, knowledge of the enemy's plans while at the same time deceiving the enemy as to his own intents. General Washington selected Sergeant Bissell to play a significant role in the events which would follow.

Bissell's instructions came through Colonel Humphreys who was acting on behalf of General Washington. The mission would be dangerous, and the goal would be to determine any plans by General Clinton to evacuate New York City and to move his troops south. In addition, Sergeant Bissell was to spread misleading rumors to confuse and delay the British in execution of their plans. Finally, he was to learn as much as possible about the number and disposition of the enemy's troops.

To gain access to the British occupied city, Bissell would travel as a deserter from the American Army. However, to win the confidence and trust of the British authorities would require that Bissell be able to convince them as to his character. This meant that he would be written off the rolls as a deserter, not only to mislead the British but his own comrades as well.

On the morning of August 13, 1781, Bissell put some food in his pack; put on a suit; packed an extra suit in his bag; put on his watch, silver buckles, etc.; and slipped away while the regiment was on parade. This was to give the illusion of deserting. When Bissell arrived at the dividing line between the British and American armies, a bridge manned by the Connecticut Light Infantry, he was approached by the infantry commander, Colonel Schammel. Previously briefed on the mission, the colonel escorted Bissell past the camp guards and sentinels; he ordered off all guards and patrols as far as Croton Bridge until midnight, giving Bissell time to cross into enemy lines. From the time Bissell crossed over, he was to answer if hailed, "Friend to Britain."

When Bissell arrived in New York, he found that General Benedict Arnold had returned from Virginia with a newly raised corps and established recruiting parties in every place where deserters could come in; that the British Fleet had got into New York and shut out the French Fleet; that the press gangs were in every part of the city; and that the commander in chief, General Harry Clinton, had issued a recent order that there would be no protection given to deserters.

After avoiding the press gangs for 3 days, Bissell, stricken by fever, was forced to enroll in Arnold's regiment for medical attention. He was soon sent to the hospital at Flushing, and by December, moved to York Island into a barn which served as a regimental hospital where he remained until May. Unable to walk, Bissell suffered from cold, hunger, and filth. The only wood allowed was for the purpose of cooking pork and pease; there was little to no medical attendance; blankets were given to only one of two men; and because his clothes had not been changed for the 3 months there, Bissell found himself covered with head and body lice.

The sudden threat of exposure finally forced Bissell to abandon his mission and escape. It seems that from early boyhood he had been in the habit of talking in his sleep, and during the temporary delirium of his fever in the British hospital, Bissell unconsciously revealed his secret to his attending physician. When the doctor hinted to Bissell of the incident, Bissell immediately made up his mind to leave. Taking into his confidence a comrade who also wished to escape, the two obtained permission from the officer of the guard to leave the lines in search of a pig which they pretended had strayed away. Accompanied by a boy whom they took along as a blind, they started forth. The adventures which followed were numerous and exciting.

Coming to a small river, Bissell supported his comrade (who was a larger man, but no swimmer) on his shoulders as he and the boy swam across. At another and wider river, they were at a loss in how to cross, and were deliberating on the subject when they spied a person approaching in a boat from the other side. When they hailed the man, he seemed frightened and threw overboard what seemed to have been a quarter of beef. As he was about to paddle off in the opposite direction, Bissell seized a small stick about the size of a horse pistol and threatened to shoot him immediately if he did not come ashore. When the man reached the beach, Bissell ordered him to take he and the other two across the river with "no questions asked or answered." This the man did, and appeared quite relieved when well rid of his load. He was probably a renegade farmer who was smuggling in beef to the British army on New York Island.

It wasn't long before Bissell and his party's escape was suspected, and they were pursued by a detachment of the British

light horse. Luckily, however, they reached a large swamp in which they hid themselves for some time, with nothing but their heads out of water. Their pursuers, accompanied by bloodhounds, rode around in vain search. Fortunately, the water threw the dogs off their scent, and after two or more hours of the most agonizing suspense, Bissell and his comrades were delighted to hear the bugle sound of recall and the footsteps of their pursuers gradually receding. They climbed up into the trees, and there cold, wet, and hungry spent a desolate night. Sergeant Bissell reached General Washington's camp on the 29th of September.

Two days after Bissell had returned safely to the American headquarters, he was informed that General Washington would not be able to give him the commission he had been promised. Because of the length of Bissell's mission, by the time he returned there were so many supernumerary officers that Congress had ordered that there be no more commissions given. Bissell was then offered a discharge or the opportunity to join the Invalid Corps and receive a pension, but he declined both and returned to his regiment as an Orderly Sergeant.

On August 7, 1782, General Washington instituted a system of positive incentives in the Continental Army. Previously, promotion in rank was the only means available to recognize outstanding conduct. Now chevrons on the left sleeve of uniform coats were authorized for noncommissioned officers and privates who completed 3 years of service "with bravery, fidelity, and good conduct"; two chevrons designated 6 years of service. The Badge of Military Merit presented to Sergeant Daniel Bissell, Jr., on June 10, 1783, represented a more significant award which combined both conspicuous gallantry and sustained outstanding conduct; even distinguishing it from today's Medal of Honor. For Sergeant Bissell to have received the "Purple Heart" meant that he had been nominated for the award by his regimental commander and the supporting documents reviewed by brigade, division, and army-level special boards. Besides the badge itself, Bissell received a certificate and had his name recorded in a special honor roll which listed all the recipients. But Sergeant Bissell was not the only one who felt a sense of personal achievement on that June

*Painting of Gen. George Washington awarding the Purple Heart (Center of Military History)*

day in Newburgh, New York. General Washington himself must have gained a great amount of satisfaction of his own as evidenced by his proclamation, "The road to glory in a patriot army and a free country is open to all"; a reference to the fact that decorations in European armies of this period were normally restricted to officers.

Through the years, the initial decoration of the three soldiers with the Purple Heart has represented a milestone in the proud and cherished traditions of the Army's enlisted soldiers. But the presentation of the award to Sergeant Daniel Bissell, Jr., symbolizes even more. It marks the first formal recognition of the role, although often unheralded, which military intelligence specialists have played in our Nation's history.

## *The Rest of the Story:*

Daniel Bissell's illustrious military career did not end with the War of Independence. In the immediate years following the war, Bissell became involved in the efforts of the United States to gain control over the Indian tribes occupying the Old Northwest Territory which lay north of the Ohio River. Once while assigned the duty of dispatcher from Philadelphia to Pittsburg, he traveled on foot, alone, to deliver important messages; all the while eluding hostile Indians and enduring bitter cold and limited rations. In 1791, Sergeant Bissell was with the St. Clair military expedition near the Maumee River when it suffered its disastrous defeat at the hands of the Indians. He and his brother were the only members of their company who escaped. He was mustered back into the service on April 11, 1792. As an officer of the Regular Army, Bissell served in the campaign against France in 1799, known as Adam's War, holding the rank of lst lieutenant in the 16th Regiment of the U.S. Infantry. In 1804, Bissell commanded Fort Massac, a military post on the Ohio River, participating in many of the important battles on the western frontier.

Upon the purchase of the province of Louisiana from France, President Jefferson appointed Bissell as military commander of that portion which today embraces the states of Missouri and

Illinois. Promoted to colonel on August 15, 1812, and later to general on March 9, 1814, Bissell participated in the last engagement of the War of 1812, when he led the United States forces in the battle of Lyon's Creek. After commanding posts at Mobile, New Orleans, and Baton Rouge in the south, Bissell retired from the Army in 1821.

# Undercover Nisei

*By Major Ann Bray*

The United States owes an incalculable debt to the Japanese-Americans who contributed so significantly to the Allied victory in World War II. On the European front, the famed 100th Infantry Battalion and 442d Regimental Combat Team were among the most highly decorated of all combat units which emerged from the war. In the Pacific, the contribution of the Nisei, or second generation Japanese-Americans, was of a different nature but equally invaluable. Here, Nisei served as translators, interpreters, and intelligence specialists, helping to not only bring about the defeat of Japan but the shortening of the war itself; while on the home front, discrimination cast its shadow over Japanese-Americans.

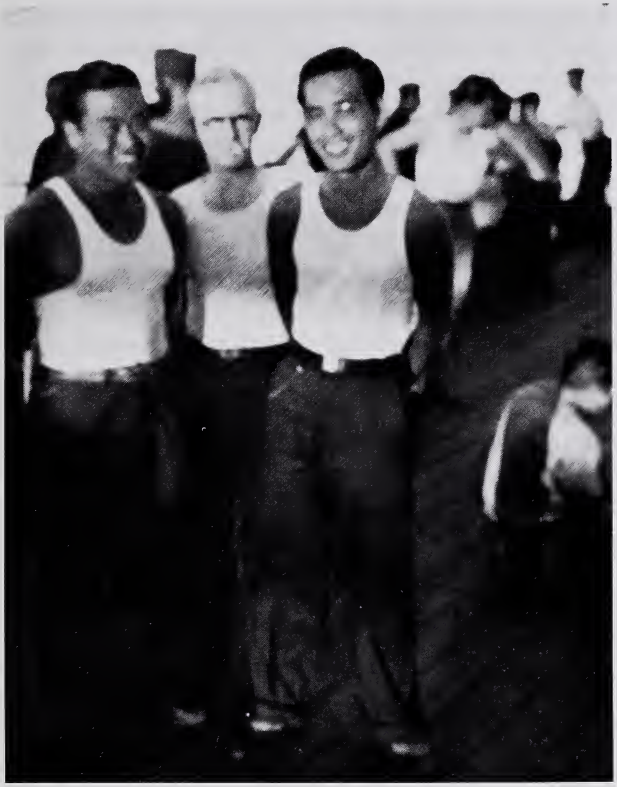
During the course of the war, there were many stories of unbelievable courage, fortitude, and loyalty of Nisei soldiers in service to their country. However, one such story is unique in that it had its beginnings 9 months before the United States entered the conflict. On March 13, 1941, two young Niseis, Richard M. Sakakida and Arthur S. Komori, were sworn in at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, with the rank of sergeant and duty with the CIP, which they were told stood for Civilian Interpreter Police. They were no strangers to the enlisting officer, Major Jack Gilbert, who had known them from his days as a military instructor at nearby McKinley High School in Honolulu. Sakakida had graduated in the class of 1939 and been named cadet colonel his senior year. Komori, also a graduate of McKinley High School where he was well-known for his athletic skills, had gone on to the University of Hawaii to win a letter in swimming as well as complete his degree in English. Flying became his hobby, and in the process, Komori had earned his private pilot's license.

The new sergeants soon learned that their duties were not, as they were originally led to believe, monitoring Japanese radio broadcasts and newspapers and making translations of those items which might be of interest to the military. They also discovered that CIP was actually the abbreviation of the Corps of

Intelligence Police, the counterintelligence arm of the U.S. Army, and that the corps had carefully selected them to be the first Nisei agents with a special assignment in mind. In the office of the G2 of the Hawaiian Department, Sakakida and Komori were informed by Colonel Marsten that their new mission might not only be a source of inconvenience but a dangerous one as well and that it could not be revealed to anyone outside their immediate family. But even if they had been able to tell others, there was little to communicate. They only knew that the Philippines was their destination; here, they would receive additional instructions. In the meantime, the two were to sign on as civilian crew of the U.S. Army transport *Republic,* heading for Manila.

At 1830 hours, April 7, the *Republic* departed from Pier 10, Honolulu, bound for the Philippines. Fourteen days later, on April 21, approximately 3 miles out of Manila, a customs launch came alongside, and a man dressed in civilian attire boarded. The same man was waiting to greet Komori and Sakakida after the two would-be sailors were summoned by the ship's captain to the bridge. Here, the stranger introduced himself as Captain Nelson Raymond, commanding officer of the CIP detachment in the Philippines, and handed them an envelope telling them to read the instructions therein and then to destroy the contents. As Japan had reached out to expand its influence militarily throughout the Far East over the last several years, diplomatic relations with the United States had grown more strained. Komori and Sakakida's mission was to keep tabs on Japanese nationals living in the Philippine capital; their cover story was that they were seamen who had jumped ship to avoid the draft. Sakakida was to proceed to the Nishikawa Hotel and Komori to the Toyo Hotel in downtown Manila; both were then to await further orders which would come through Captain Raymond. A primary point of contact was to be a mail box at the Central Post Office in Manila listed under the Filipino name Sixto Borja to correspond with Sakakida's codename B-16. The box was to be checked twice daily to learn which predetermined rendezvous point should be used. In turn, the two agents were to use the post office as a drop point for their own reports which would eventually find their way to the intelligence officers working for General Douglas MacArthur, commander of all forces in the Philippines.

Once the ship had docked, Captain Raymond and Agent Grenfell Drisko were on hand to give the two agents a quick tour



*Sakakida (right) and Komori (left) aboard courier to Philippines (Courtesy of Richard M. Sakakida)*

of the city before letting them off to take their own taxis to their respective hotels. Apart from the new experience of having to deal with the Spanish language, Sakakida and Komori adjusted very quickly. The Nishikawa Hotel proved to be an ideal place for Sakakida to establish contacts. In fact, Sakakida was so readily accepted by the hotel's Japanese proprietor and his wife that they, having no children of their own, soon expressed a desire to adopt him as their own. Fortunately, Sakakida's mother wrote a letter thanking the couple for their kindness toward her son but indicated that she must say no.

Normally, Captain Raymond met the two agents personally but sometimes Agent Drisko was assigned the task. From the

rendezvous point, they were often taken by car to the office of the G2 at nearby Fort Santiago, where they submitted their reports or received briefings. Captain Raymond, a longtime agent and intelligence expert in Far East matters, furnished them with both instructions and encouragement. According to Komori, the officer "gradually instilled in us the techniques of subtle investigations and subterfuges in the best traditions of the CIP." As time went on, they developed great admiration and affection for this man who in turn expressed deep appreciation for the work they were doing.

Like Sakakida, Komori found that contacts with nationalistic Japanese came easy, especially after sharing the fact that he had jumped ship and was trying to avoid the draft. Over the coming months, Komori managed to win the confidence and friendship of the Japanese Consul General, the Chief of the Japan Tourist Bureau, and other leading Japanese residents in Manila among whom he found many "pro-Emperor sons of Japan." Due to his academic studies, the Nisei agent was able to secure a job with *Domei*, the Japanese news agency where he also became good friends with the bureau's chief. He even taught a class in English at the Japan Cultural Hall. One example of the growing hostility that Komori detected among the Japanese community was an article written by a student of his which openly suggested a route by which Japan could invade Singapore.

Since it was necessary for Sakakida to have some sort of cover for his present life style, Captain Raymond arranged with the Marsman Trading Company, sole agents for Sears Roebuck in the Philippines, for the undercover agent to be placed on their employee list. Sakakida told everyone that he was working with the Sears office in Honolulu to ensure that all merchandise arrived in the Philippines in satisfactory condition and to handle all complaints. Each morning at 8 o'clock, Sakakida would arrive at the store where he had made an effort to become acquainted with every salesperson. A half-hour later, after performing a few routine tasks and errands, he would leave by the side entrance and spend the rest of the morning at the nearby Lyric Theater. Since he had communicated to the people at the hotel that his job only required a half day's work, Sakakida was then free to make contacts and move around the city the rest of the day.

Because of Sakakida's availability, Mr. Fujii, the hotel owner, hired him as a clerk, a job which gave him the opportunity to inspect passports of visiting Japanese as well as to obtain valuable information while assisting persons in filling out passport entry forms. In the process, Sakakida was able to skirt Army regulations which prohibited double compensation by agreeing to work for his room and board.

Soon after Sakakida's arrival in the Philippines, Captain Raymond informed him of another Hawaiian born Nisei, Clarence Yamagata, who was practicing law in Manila and who had been hired as a part-time attorney and legal advisor to the Japanese Consulate. Educated at the University of California, Los Angeles, the young lawyer, like so many other Niseis, found professional opportunities back home limited due to de facto discrimination before the war. However, the Japanese government and industry were quick to hire these neglected sources of expertise. Raymond's assignment for Sakakida was to befriend Yamagata and collect as much information as possible from him. (Author Joseph Harrington in his book, *Yankee Samurai*, speculates that Yamagata may have already been recruited by Captain Raymond for intelligence work.)

As a fellow Nisei from Hawaii, Sakakida easily established a friendship with Yamagata, who, in turn, was very solicitous of his new friend's welfare and insisted that Sakakida call upon him any time for assistance. An opportunity would soon arise by which Sakakida could exploit this new found relationship. On July 25, 1941, the United States froze all Japanese assets to include those in the Philippine commonwealth as a response to Japan's increased military aggression throughout Asia. This act by the U.S. Government required Japanese Nationals to file declarations of all banking accounts and assets. After learning from Yamagata the correct procedures to complete the required forms, Sakakida was able to offer his assistance to many Japanese nationals. For a nominal fee, he subtly obtained through his interviews much information which did not appear on the form. For example, one question was what, if any, military service did the respondents possess? Later, Sakakida reported to the G-2 such additional information as branch of service, where, and when they had been assigned. In some cases, Sakakida even encouraged the

applicants not to answer the question truthfully, only to submit the correct answer through secret channels.

On December 8, 1941, the U.S. Congress declared war on Japan in response to that nation's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor the day before. The 8th was also the date that Japanese planes bombed Manila; the invasion of the Philippines had begun. Komori was drinking a toast to the Emperor with his new found friends at the *Domei* News Agency when Philippine constabulary broke into the office. To the local authorities, Komori was just as Japanese as the others, and they proceeded to herd the group at bayonet point into waiting buses destined for the hell-hole of Manila, old Bilidid Prison. With complete faith that Captain Raymond would somehow manage to learn his whereabouts, Komori proceeded to derive as much information as he could about what, if any, assistance his cellmates had provided to the invading forces. What Komori did acquire amid the stench of Bilidid was an important lesson in the psyche of the fanatical Japanese militarist; one which he would later put to good use.

Upon outbreak of hostilities, Sakakida accompanied the Japanese nationals being rounded up and detained at the Japanese Club House in Manila which had been turned into an evacuation center. The young agent had been told that he was to continue his mission until notified otherwise by his superiors. However, there was one problem. At the center he was met and searched by one of the civilians in charge, a Mr. Paul Marinas, who found on him his fictitious American passport. Sakakida quickly explained that although an American citizen, he was in fear of his life from locals who might not be able to distinguish a citizen from an enemy. It was agreed that Sakakida could continue to remain at the center but would be free to leave any time that he wanted. At the time, neither Sakakida nor the civilian doing the screening realized that each was a fellow member of the Corps of Intelligence Police.

A short time later, Sakakida was sent out with another internee to obtain food for the camp's children. After helping to load the goods, he then returned to his room at the Nishikawa Hotel to pick up his belongings, but while packing, three constabulary secret service agents entered and arrested him on suspicion of being a spy. The next stop was Bilidid prison where, like Komori, he was rescued in a few days by Agent Drisko. Nine months

after their adventure had begun, both were back in uniform, and for the first time, united with their fellow members of the Corps of Intelligence Police (soon to be redesignated the Counter Intelligence Corps).

The military situation in the Philippines deteriorated rapidly. On December 23, 1941, the office of the G-2 and its personnel were evacuated from Manila to the peninsula of Bataan and eventually to the island fortress of Corregidor which lay off its tip. Here, both Sakakida and Komori gained invaluable experience in dealing with captured Nipponese soldiers. Apparently, the Japanese were well prepared to die for their homeland, but the prospect of being captured was alien to their thinking, leaving them vulnerable to interrogation. The two Americans would claim to accept the POW's stories at face value during the initial interrogation but would later seek out additional information, such as from captured documents and military identification, which would impugn the prisoners' veracity. Once confronted with their lies during subsequent interviews, the captured Japanese soldiers would break down in shame and tell all.

On one occasion Sakakida was able to translate a captured Japanese document in time to permit U.S. tanks to successfully ambush the enemy, thwarting their plans for a landing. The two Nisei agents also alternated on the front lines, broadcasting propaganda to the enemy and writing bulletins which were hurled by giant slingshots behind Japanese lines. But their attempts at sedition only resulted in increased shelling by the enemy.

Ordered to Corregidor in March, Sakakida was assigned work with Detachment 6, Second Signal Service Company to help decipher the intercepted messages of the enemy (see the companion story, "Signalman's Odyssey"). In early April, the CIP agent was joined in this work by Komori and Yamagata who although a civilian had been brought to Corregidor by now Major Raymond. With the fall of Bataan on April 8, 1942, and the collapse of Corregidor anticipated shortly, General MacArthur's newly established headquarters in Australia sent orders to evacuate both Komori and Sakakida on one of the last flights off "The Rock." Linguists would desperately be needed if the fortunes of the Allies were to be reversed in the Pacific Theater.

On the other hand, the situation appeared desperate for Yamagata who faced the grim prospect of capture by the enemy. Sakakida recognized that captors would not deal easily with the one-time employee of the Japanese diplomatic service and the husband of a Japanese national wife with three children, all of whom had been sent home to Japan before the war. With this in mind, Sakakida voluntarily approached Colonel Wood, G2 under General Wainwright, and requested that Yamagata be allowed to take his reserved seat on the planned flight. To his credit, Sakakida made the magnanimous gesture even though he still entertained doubts as to Yamagata's unreserved loyalty. (Time would disprove these suspicions.)

Once approval for the amended passenger list was received from higher headquarters in Australia, the small trainer aircraft which had survived an earlier crash landing was readied for takeoff at Kindley Field, Corregidor's small airstrip. When the airplane lifted off on April 13, Komori and Yamagata were two of the three passengers on board besides the pilot. As the plane headed for Iloilo, Panay Island, Komori was even able to practice his flying skills, taking the controls on one occasion.

At Panay, the four boarded a second plane; this one a B-25 piloted by the legendary "Pappy" Gunn who in turn flew them to Del Monte, Mindanao, for a refueling. By taking aboard 55-gallon drums of fuel, Gunn and his passengers were able to make the next leg of the trip which landed them in Australia in 17 hours. Reportedly, this was the longest recorded flight for a B-25 up to that time.

Once on the ground in Melbourne, Komori quickly found out that he was not regarded as such an important asset as he had been led to believe. After preparing an invaluable report on how to deal with Japanese POW's, Komori was given a duty assignment as a driver—a most unusual way to utilize the only U.S. soldier with actual combat experience in interrogating Japanese. Fortunately, Komori's contribution did not end here. With the establishment of the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service soon thereafter, Komori and a growing number of fellow Nisei were able to contribute immensely to filling the intelligence void by translating documents and interrogating Japanese POW's.

Clarence Yamagata would also make his mark. Although denied a security clearance for some time, due to the sensitivity

of the work involved and his family situation, Yamagata was eventually commissioned an officer with the Central Bureau of Brisbane, the Allied cryptologic organization based in Australia. He would be one of only a handful of Nisei permitted to be engaged in this most secret undertaking.

When Komori and Yamagata's plane lifted off "The Rock" in April 1942, there was little left for Sakakida to do but help his fellow Counter Intelligence Corps members destroy records and wait. The end would come on May 6 when the final surrender was announced. On this day, still in military uniform, Sakakida set out with General Wainwright to serve as interpreter at the surrender conference on Bataan; but at Cabacabana Port, the victorious Japanese informed the American party that Sakakida would not be needed and that they would supply the interpreter.

Sakakida spent the next 6 months back at Bilidid Prison in Manila undergoing interrogation at the hands of the Japanese Military Police and officers from the Judge Advocate General's Section of the Fourteenth Army Headquarters. The interrogation eventually led to physical torture, beginning with burns from lit cigarettes and ending with Sakakida's hands being tied behind his back and his body being lifted by a rope until his shoulders were dislocated. All the while, his tormentors continued to try and shake him from his story that he was an American draft dodger who had jumped ship only to be forced to work for the U.S. Army as an interpreter once the war had broken out. They even confronted Sakakida with former Japanese POW's who testified that the American had interrogated them while wearing an Army uniform. Sakakida repeated the story of having returned to his hotel for clothes but having been stopped in the process by local Filipino police; the Army uniform had been loaned to him as a replacement. Sakakida's greatest fear at this time was that some military record of him left behind at the time of the American surrender would be found, possibly the recommendation for his commission.

Under existing law, all persons of Japanese ancestry, regardless of where they were born or lived, were considered citizens of the empire. Consequently, the Japanese authorities viewed Sakakida as a traitor, and Sakakida could only wait helplessly while a military tribunal debated whether or not he should be shot. Fortunately, he was able to finally convince the Japanese to check

*Sgt. Richard M. Sakakida (Courtesy of Richard M. Sakakida)*

the citizenship records of the Japanese home ministry—knowing that his mother had taken action after his departure for the Philippines to have his dual citizenship status changed to only that of an American. After what seemed like an eternity for the young American agent, the Fourteenth Army Headquarters finally received word from Tokyo that, although Sakakida had been registered with the Japanese Consul in Hawaii at birth as was the custom of Japanese residents, his citizenship had been officially voided in August 1941. But Sakakida's troubles were not over. Although the charge of treason was dropped, it was quickly replaced by the allegation of disturbing the peace and order of the Japanese Imperial Forces in the Philippines.

Finally, on February 11, 1943, he was taken from Bilidid Prison to the office of a Colonel Nishiharu, Chief Judge Advocate of the Fourteenth Army Headquarters, who evidently had reviewed

Sakakida's story. Here the colonel informed him that he was being freed to work in the Judge Advocate's office, run a mimeograph machine, make tea, and help out generally where he was needed, and that during his off-duty time, he would serve as a house boy at the colonel's home. At first Sakakida protested, feigning fear that if he should ever be captured by the Americans, he would face charges of treason a second time; but the colonel dismissed the young American's concern and declared the matter done. (Possibly, Sakakida owed his conditional release more to the fact that it was a Japanese holiday—the 2603d anniversary of the ascension to the throne by Jimmu, Japan's first emperor—than to the good will of the Japanese colonel.)

At the same time, agents of the Bocho Han, the Japanese counterintelligence arm, approached Sakakida with the proposition that he be reassigned to work with them. As in the case of the colonel's offer, Sakakida dared not to show enthusiasm even though he relished the idea of working for Japanese security—what an opportunity to collect valuable information. Apparently because of Sakakida's outward coolness to the prospect, the Japanese agents made no attempt to revive the matter. (After the war had ended, Sakakida would learn from one of the agents involved that their real purpose was to recruit Sakakida for sabotage and espionage in his own Hawaii.)

Although the Japanese seemed to have accepted his story, they continued in devious ways to trap him into an admission that he was in the U.S. Army. One day an officer threw him a .45 pistol and curtly ordered him to clean it. Realizing that if he properly disassembled the weapon, it would be an admission of military service, Sakakida merely wiped the .45 with an oily rag but explained that if someone would take it apart, he would be glad to clean the rest of it thoroughly.

On a second occasion, another Japanese officer, himself a graduate of Harvard, sympathetically asked Sakakida how much the U.S. Army had paid him for his work as an interpreter. Recognizing this as a ruse used to learn the rank of prisoners, he claimed to have received no money but had been billeted and given rations instead.

Every month, Colonel Nishiharu received a shipment of captured American goods from Japanese headquarters, such as cigarettes, liquor, and food items. Since the colonel did not

smoke, Sakakida took it upon himself to relieve the household of a number of cigarettes. On the third carton, he was caught in the act and reprimanded by the colonel for continuing to exhibit "Yankeeism traits," thinking too individualistically, and concerning himself only about entertainment and comfort. The Japanese officer proceeded to have Sakakida banned from his house as being untrustworthy and sent him to live at the barracks, formerly the English Club in Manila. The move would soon prove to be a blessing in disguise for Sakakida.

Although no longer living at the colonel's home, Sakakida remained employed as a handyman at the office of the Chief Judge Advocate where he found himself in position to make contact with family members of Filipino guerrillas being confined at nearby Muntinglupa Prison. Among the prisoners was an Earnest Tupas, a Filipino who had, at one time, served in the same unit as Sakakida during the defense of the Philippines. Sakakida recognized Tupas' wife on one of her trips to the Chief Judge Advocate's office to seek permission to visit her husband. On her third such visit, Sakakida identified himself as a former comrade-in-arms and gave her a fictitious visitor's pass, one made with forms stolen from the Judge Advocate's office and signed with forged signatures. Sakakida assured her that there would be no problems since the Filipino guards could not read Japanese and soon provided her with similar forms to give to other wives of imprisoned guerrilla leaders. All the while, Sakakida had bigger things on his mind than just forged prison passes.

Being billeted at the English Club allowed Sakakida more freedom than he had known before. Although the Japanese warrant officer in charge was a strict disciplinarian and took rolls twice a day, at 0630 hours and 2230 hours, there was still time to slip out of the barracks between the nightly bed checks. Sakakida now had the opportunity to plan and organize a prison break.

Through his contact with Mrs. Tupas, he was able to send messages to local guerrillas who could scout the number of prison guards and the time of day when they were relieved. From their reports, Sakakida learned that the local Japanese garrison made a security check of the prison usually between 2400 and 0200 hours in the morning. Sakakida also arranged for Earnest Tupas to obtain a job with the prison electrical department in whose shop the main switches of the prison were located.

On the designated night, just prior to the arrival of the Japanese garrison troops for their routine check, Sakakida, dressed in the uniform of a Japanese officer and accompanied by four guerrillas disguised as soldiers, approached the main gate of the prison. As the two prison guards saw them coming, they made their customarily bow only to find .45's stuck in their ribs. Inside, the electrical switches were pulled, plunging the prison into darkness and providing the opportunity for 25 armed guerrillas to enter and overpower the remaining guards. All in all, nearly 500 prisoners, former guerrillas, were freed. Unfortunately, despite Sakakida's urging for all of them to flee to the protection of the surrounding hills, a number remained in Manila to see family members and were subsequently recaptured.

Sakakida was able to sneak back into his barracks in time to make the next morning's roll call and was at work in the Judge Advocate's office when news came of the prison break the night before. To his delight, he was the one called upon to personally deliver the news to Colonel Nishiharu who, enraged, demanded an immediate investigation which eventually led to the dismissal of the prison superintendent.

After the freeing of the guerrillas, Sakakida continued to make contact with Tupas whose forces were now located in the mountains of Rizal. Through Filipino runners, Sakakida could send messages to the guerrilla leader who, in turn, could communicate with General MacArthur's headquarters in Australia by either submarine or radio. With his new network, Sakakida was able to begin sending regular intelligence reports mainly dealing with shipping information and the movement of Japanese troops. Perhaps the most important of the reports concerned the assembly of a Japanese Force at Davao in the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. Approximately 15 Japanese troop transports and destroyers were believed to have headed south for the front lines. Whether by Sakakida's reports or by other intelligence sources or a combination of the two is uncertain, but what is sure is that U.S. submarines were awaiting the convoy. Sakakida received a first hand account of the battle losses by a Japanese officer who was on the only ship to survive the American attack and who later returned to work in Colonel Nishiharu's office.

During this period, Sakakida's hopes for freedom were buoyed when he was approached by one of the Filipino contacts who

indicated that he had received a message from an unknown third party, asking whether or not Sakakida wanted to leave the Philippines, presumingly for Australia. Sensing that he could be possibly walking into a trap, Sakakida hedged on his answer and replied that it would be necessary for him to meet directly with the third party. Such a meeting never came about. (Sakakida would learn after the war that the initial contact had indeed been legitimate and that one of the guerrilla groups, this one headed by a Major Anderson, had been instructed to get Sakakida back to Australia. However, the garbled message returned to higher headquarters was that Sakakida had personally communicated his preference for remaining undercover in the Philippines.) In October 1944, Sakakida's spirits were again lifted; this time by news of the Allied invasion of the Philippines. But the road home for the young American soldier would not be soon or easy.

By December, a bold amphibious landing by a U.S. task force on the Philippine island of Mindoro had put the Japanese on the defensive. Meanwhile on the main island of Luzon, the Fourteenth Japanese Army under General Yamashita had left Manila under air attack and was headed north. Among the ranks of the army's staff was Sakakida who, ironically, had been reassigned to the intelligence section. Unfortunately, because the American remained under increasing scrutiny, he could not take advantage of his new position. With concentric landings by the United States in the north, east, and south, the Japanese army was being forced toward the center of the island. As tension mounted within the ever encircled headquarters, Sakakida sensed increased hostility being directed toward him and knew that he must make his break soon. Finally, in the early part of June, he was able to slip away; but still, he was far from freedom and safety. What if nearby Filipino guerrillas should shoot first and ask questions later, mistaking him for the enemy?

Fortunately, in a short time, Sakakida was able to join up with a small band of guerrillas, but this new venture lasted only a little over a week when the group came under attack. Intense Japanese artillery fire left Sakakida wounded and the rest of the band scurrying for safety. Sakakida was once again alone, but now he faced a much different enemy—infection and disease. For the next 2 months, Sakakida, his body racked with beri-beri, malaria, and dysentery, struggled just to survive. Although in great discomfort, the sergeant continued to follow a nearby river in

*Sakakida aboard courier enroute to participate in war crime trials (Courtesy of Richard M. Sakakida)*

hopes that it would lead to civilization and friendly territory. Instead, the next humans that he came across were six or eight German soldiers—or so it appeared at first glance.

As Sakakida edged closer from his place of concealment, he was startled to hear the soldiers speaking English. It was then he realized that they must be Americans with new uniforms and equipment—nearly 4 years had passed since he had been one of them. It was the soldiers' turn next to be startled when an English-speaking Japanese soldier approached them telling them that he was an American sergeant, captured at Corregidor, and recently escaped from the enemy. At first, the major in charge was

suspicious but made the call anyway to the nearest Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) field office just in case someone could verify Sakakida's story. Two hours later, Sakakida saw his liberators drive up in a jeep—two CIC lieutenants. The personal war of Sergeant Richard M. Sakakida was finally over.

## *The Rest of the Story:*

Although the fighting had ceased, much remained before a just peace could be established; and Agent Richard M. Sakakida, CIC, played an important role in this phase. Because Sakakida was one of the few Americans with firsthand knowledge of the events which had transpired in the Japanese-occupied Philippines, he was allowed little convalescent time before assuming the responsibility of helping his fellow CIC members to round up, identify, and interrogate personnel suspected of committing war crimes. Later, at the war crime trials, Sakakida returned to the Philippines to serve as a key witness for the Allies.

For his valiant service with disregard for his own safety, Sakakida was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. He would continue his distinguished career as a commissioned officer with the Air Force Office of Special Investigation until retiring to California where he resides today.

Arthur S. Komori was also recognized for his performance of duty in the Philippines and in Australia with the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service which used the guidelines the young soldier helped establish to interrogate Japanese POW's throughout the war in the Pacific. Later, Komori rejoined the Counter Intelligence Corps under the theater command of General Elliott Thorpe. He was reportedly the first CIC agent assigned to occupied Japan after the war in an undercover status. Komori was also decorated with the Bronze Star Medal for his highly-exemplary performance of duty undertaken at great personal risk and sacrifice.

Like his compatriot, Komori completed a distinguised military career, including his appointment as a warrant officer. Upon retirement, Komori established his own successful law practice in Honolulu where he still resides.

And as for Clarence Yamagata and his service with the Central Bureau in Brisbane, he was awarded the Legion of Merit at the conclusion of the war as well as being recognized by his fellow soldiers within the unit as the individual best embodying the highest professional standards. In 1948, he left the U.S. Army with a rank of major and retired to Japan.

Finally, there is Major Nelson Raymond, the last commander of the Philippine CIC Detachment before the surrender and mentor of both Komori and Sakakida. He is believed to have drowned while confined in a sinking Japanese prison ship and was joined in death by nine others of his detachment.

# Aerial Reconnaissance—Its Beginnings

*From the earliest times, knowledge of an adversary's location and intentions often spelled the difference between victory and defeat for the military commander. Reconnaissance on foot and on horseback became an integral part of battlefield strategy. However, intelligence derived from reports of scouts and cavalry was often limited by the surrounding physical terrain. If only man had wings!*

On November 21, 1783, the dream of manned flight became a reality when two Frenchmen, Ilatre de Rozier and the Marquis D'Arlandes, covered a distance of 5 miles in about 25 minutes over Paris while using a hot air balloon designed by brothers Jacques and Joseph Montgolfier, local paper manufacturers. From the beginning, the possibilities of using the balloon for military purposes were readily apparent. Benjamin Franklin, in Paris at the time of the Montgolfiers' experiments, prophetically wrote: "This method of filling the balloon with hot air is cheap and expeditious, and it may be sufficient for certain purposes, such as elevating an engineer to take a view of an enemy's army, works, etc., conveying intelligence into, or out of a besieged town, giving signals to distant places, or the like."

The use of tethered balloons for observation purposes began in Europe as early as 1794, and pilotless Austrian balloons dropped bombs during the seige of Venice in 1849. In France in 1858, Felix Nadar took the first successful aerial photographs from a hot air balloon. However, the first military deployment of balloons did not take place in the United States until the Civil War when both sides experimented with relaying intelligence reports from captive balloons fastened to the ground by long cables. Although the overall impact of the efforts proved minuscule, one notable exception was the Battle of Fair Oaks near Richmond, Virginia, on May 31, 1862. That was when Professor Thaddeus Lowe, the most noted of the Union aeronauts, successfully telegraphed the direction of enemy advances from his

balloon, *Intrepid*, to waiting battlefield commanders who countered with reinforcements. As a footnote to their reconnaissance efforts, Lowe, and other Union balloonists also briefly tried their hand at aerial photography. After the War Between the States, the Army did not make further use of balloons for intelligence purposes until the Spanish-American War when an observation balloon was successfully raised at the Battle of Santiago. Also in the 1890's, the Army conducted experiments using cameras attached to huge kites as a possible intelligence-gathering mechanism.

The Wright brothes' successful powered flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in 1903, enabled man to become a permanent inhabitant of the air. Six years later, the Army purchased its first aircraft and opened the door to modern warfare. By 1916, the Signal Corps Aviation Section had grown large enough to create the 1st Aero Squadron commanded by Major Benjamin Foulois. Army aviation's first test was to provide aerial reconnaissance to General John J. Pershing and his troops as they pursued the elusive bandit—Pancho Villa—across Mexico in 1916. However, when the United States entered World War I a year later, the Army and its aviation wing were still nearly 3 years behind the other combatants in battlefield experience.

World War I witnessed development of new instruments of warfare, such as the submarine and tank. At the same time, advances in existing technologies allowed for their deployment in new modes. Two of these were the airplane and the camera; once combined, they would bcome inseparably linked in the future.

The story of the beginnings of U.S. Army photo intelligence is not one of a single individual, but rather, of a group of heroes: the pilots, observers, and cameramen who almost daily for a period of 6 months, between April and October 1918, risked their lvies to gather vital information for the Allies. Theirs was a baptism under fire; experiences which are best told in their own words or those of official unit logs.

On April 15, 1918, a plane from the 1st Aero Squadron flew the first reconnaissance mission for the American Expeditionary Force over an enemy-held section of France. Lieutenant Fred E. D'Amour, a photographer with the squadron, describes one of the early flights along with its accompanying hazards:

"Protection had been promised by the First Pursuit Group. We landed at Saints where the fighters were based and agreed to meet their patrol over Conluise at 1,000 meters. Rendezvous made. Started for the front. Low clouds blocked our flight path and we lost our fighter protection. Went ahead anyway to get the assigned pictures. The photographs were to be obliques of strong points in the rear of the German lines. The first film magazine was taken of the target area without incident, but after five pictures were exposed on the second magazine the camera jammed. I changed magazines but the camera still refused to operate. On investigating I found that broken glass had worked into the shutter and the camera was definitely out of commission. Since we were already deep behind enemy lines, we decided to make a reconnaissance of the enemy rear in an effort to locate pillboxes in the area and any new construction. After noting the position of these installations, we started home at an altitude of 600 meters with average ground fire being fired at us.

"As we neared the front lines on our return flight, however, the ground fire became extremely active. When we were still about 12 kilometers inside the German lines an antiaircraft shell exploded directly underneath the motor, tearing a large piece off the end of the propeller blade and stopping the motor. We started down; emptied our machine guns on the way down because we had incendiary bullets in them. The German guns increased their barrage and our plane took several more hits. Just as Lieutenant Wold was leveling off preparatory to landing, the motor started again. However, the piece torn off the propeller cut down on our power and we flew the rest of the way out which was about 10 kilometers at from 10 to 40 meters altitude. Tracers from ground machine guns formed a formation all around the ship, tearing away a flying wire, and another shell tore a large hole in the elevator. Some days later the chief of the army corps visited the field and stated that the photographs taken that day had given them information of valuable importance, and that dugouts sheltering an entire regiment of enemy troops had been located and destroyed by our artillery after being detected on one of our pictures."

*Officers of 1st Aero Squadron pose before reconnaissance flight (U.S. Army photo)*

*1st Aero Squadron in formation during World War I (U.S. Army photo)*

Three days later, Lieutenant E.G. Wold would again face heavy odds when he volunteered to go it alone on a dangerous reconnaissance mission. Once over enemy lines, he was immediately engaged by five enemy craft. Through skillful maneuvering and fighting he was able to evade his pursuers and make it to the safety of his own lines; however, his wounds were so severe that he lost consciousness and control of his airplane, fatally crashing.

On August 10, another crew of the 1st Aero Squadron took off for a routine photographic mission over the Chateau-Thierry area and enemy held lines. Lieutenant William Erwin, pilot, filed the following report on his return:

"We started out at 7 a.m. for pictures just above Pere-en-Tardenois in the Chateau-Thierry sector. The pictures had to be

taken regardless of everything as our troops were to advance over that ground the next day, and the camera would save many lives by uncovering new battery positions, machine gun emplacements, and the like. Arrangements were made by telephone for a Spad squadron of a neighboring pursuit group to act as protection since the Germans had an overwhelming concentration of air forces in our sector at the time. It wasn't unusual for as many as 40 or 50 German machines echeloned in three formations to patrol the area.

"Attaining our altitude we were met by eight Spads and started out for the front lines. Before reaching the lines two of the Spads developed motor trouble and lost the formation. When we reached the place where we were to photograph we were at an

altitude of about 3,000 meters and, the coast seeming clear, Lieutenant Baucom started filming. I was paying strict attention to my course so that the pictures would be the best possible when I suddenly saw the leader of the Spads dive around my wing. This was the prearranged signal that the Huns were in the air and about to attack. I yelled through the speaking tube to Baucom but he was already on the job. I think he could smell a Hun—I know one never caught him napping. Pulling up into a chandelle, I saw the party had already commenced. Eleven Fokkers had dived out of the sun on the seven of us, and a dogfight had commenced in earnest.

"One Spad climbed on a Fokker's tail and started down whereupon, apparently from out of nowhere, a Fokker started pouring it into this Spad. I whipped my nose around and started my Vickers pumping a stream of tracers into the German. He dropped off into a kind of half spin and disappeared under my wing but my bullets came too late. The chap he was shooting at fell out of control and crashed 1,200 feet below. I learned later that it was Lieutenant Beauchamp, a chap who had come over from the States with me, and we had taken all our training together. Almost at this moment I heard the tracers that seemed to be coming from under my right wing. I dove down into this fellow with my own gun firing. Meanwhile, Baucom was giving the glad hand to the one on our tail. I thought "good old Lewis gun" when one of the German guns cut out. Suddenly both of Baucom's guns jammed. The Fokker on our tail moved in for the kill, but Captain Vaconcelles, seeing our plight, attacked and shot the enemy plane down. The other retired.

"Lieutenant Baucom had only about 16 pictures whereas our strip required at least 36. After landing and refueling, I started out again at 11 a.m. with Lieutenant Earl B. Spenser as observer. We managed to get 12 plates of valuable pictures at 2,500 meters when 10 Fokkers cut us off from returning to our lines. I dove under them at full speed but was caught. In the ensuing flight I shot down one Fokker attacking me head-on. However, our plane was badly damaged. The camera was shot full of holes, several wires were cut, our spar was shot through in two places, and Lieutenant Spenser was wounded in the side.

"Six pilots were lost in the attempt to get the pictures, in order that the boys on the ground might advance with less cost of their lives...."

The 91st Aero Squadron was a sister unit to the 1st Aero Squadron and was created from a number of aviation detachments from Army posts in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. The squadron did not reach France until late 1917. When Major John N. Reynolds took command of the 91st Aero Squadron in February 1918, the unit was far from ready to see combat. The morale of the newly assigned pilots was unbelievably low due to the fact that most of the flyers had been pulled from a possible dream assignment with a pursuit squadron to perform observation duty. But the personality of Major Reynolds worked wonders, and it was only a matter of a few days before the squadron had become welded together into a close association of real friends with a common purpose. Under the leadership of "Major John," as he became known immediately after the first officers meeting, the 91st would be molded into what Major General Benjamin Foulois and Brigadier General Billy Mitchell later termed "the best Army Squadron on the front."

"The 30th (September) was a big day for the 91st. In all, the squadron exposed 234 plates over the enemy lines, and fought five combats, during which two enemy ships were brought down. The flying ordnance officer, Tom Jervey, with Vic Strahm, took pictures for the first time, snapping 36 of which 34 were good; while Professor Strahm's boy Victor, not wishing to have his observer get too much credit, shot down an enemy Rumpler which seemed to resent their presence in that locality. Lambert and Pope were acting as protection for Vic and Tom. Soon after the Rumpler had dropped, Lambert dove on a formation of three Pfalzes which were trying to prevent the mission from returning, and in the combat which followed sent one of them down out of control. The enemy plane crashed just south of Stenay."

During nearly 5 months of combat from May to the November armistice, the 91st Aero Squadron flew 252 visual reconnaissances and 108 photographic missions, producing nearly 3,700 successful negatives. To accomplish their mission, the pilots and their crewmen had to engage the enemy in combat on 139 different occasions. The crew of the 91st were credited with destroying 21 enemy planes although numerous other shoot downs could not be confirmed. All of this was not accomplished without a cost—10 officers of the squadron were killed in action and another 3 were loss in accidents; 9 other comrades-in-arms became prisoners of war and 13 were wounded. Of the 24 officers assigned to the

unit in May 1918, 13 received the Distinguish Service Medal and 2 received the Croix de Guerre.

Lieutenant Paul Coles was typical of the officers who served with the 91st Aero Squadron. From the moment he arrived at the unit, he exhibited a remarkable coolness under fire. His first opportunity to prove himself came when two members of another team had disappeared on an observation mission on the 14th of September. On his first outing, enemy artillery fire had torn off half of both lower wings, making the airship almost unmanageable; but somehow, Coles had succeeded in nursing the plane back to the field, making a good landing. Upon his safe return, his first words were a simple, "How long will it take to put on another pair of wings? I like to fly that boat, she handles so well." The next day, however, Coles accompanied by a sister ship piloted by Lieutenant "Bust-'em-Up" George Kenney, dubiously named for already having spent 2 months in the hospital with a broken ankle sustained in a crash, was not as fortunate.

"The first flight started out on a photographic mission from Gorze north, and had barely started taking pictures when the formation of four was attacked by six Pfalz scouts. Two of them dove for Coles's ship which was flying as protection in the rear, and at the first burst a machinegun bullet pierced his neck, forcing him to make for the lines, as he wanted to land safely before he fainted from loss of blood. The other three jumped Kenney's machine, but his observer, Bill Badham who had just straightened up in the cockpit from taking pictures, poured a few bursts into one of the enemy machines, sending it down in flames. Kenney's ship was badly shot up, one of the elevators being almost off, and he had to turn back toward the field. In spite of losing the rest of the flight, Diek and Hammond (a third camera crew) climbed back to regain the altitude lost during the combat and continued on their mission which they accomplished without further attack, although several formations of enemy ships were seen around them."

On November 7, 1918, just a few days before the fighting on the western front ceased, Lieutenant Edward Russel Moore and Lieutenant Gardiner P. Allen, photographic crew of the 8th Aero Squadron, were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for

*Pilots preparing flight for reconnaissance mission (National Archives)*

extraordinary heroism in action near Thaiutourt, France. The order read as follows:

"...Lieutenant Moore and Lieutenant Allen, observer, took advantage of a short period of fair weather during generally unfavorable atmospheric conditions to undertake a photographic mission behind the German lines. Accompanied by two protecting planes, they had just commenced their mission when they were attacked by eight planes which followed them through their course, firing at the photographic plane. Lieutenant Moore, with both flying wires cut by bullets, the landing wire shot away, the elevators riddled with bullets, and both wings punctured, continued on the prescribed course although it made him an easy target. Lieutenant Allen was thus enabled in the midst of the attack to take pictures of the exact territory assigned. He made no attempt to protect the plane with his machine guns, displaying an entire disregard of personal danger and steadfast devotion to duty. The two officers successfully completed their photographic mission."

The pilots and observers of World War I were pioneers in the truest sense of the word. They risked their lives to bring valuable information back to the tactical commander and proved on countless occasions that photo intelligence was an essential requirement in any war of the future. Theirs was a unique legacy of the finest fighting traditions coupled with the technical skills of military intelligence specialists.

# Death to the Americans

*By Thomas M. Johnson*

By late 1917, the Central Powers led by Germany had forced Czarist Russia to withdraw from the conflict which had engulfed Europe. With the coming spring and summer, Germany was buoyed by hopes that with added men and materiel released from the eastern front, it could at last break the stalemate caused by trench warfare in the west. The crucial battles of Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Woods, and St. Mihiel lay ahead; each would test the Allies, particularly the American Expeditionary Force led by General John J. Pershing.

Although the following adventure merits only a footnote to the events of the day, nevertheless, during the critical summer months of 1918, victory or defeat could have turned on the most narrow of margins. Our story unfolds in the old French city of Beaune, then an important center of the American Services of Supply. There, in the back of a small bar, sat three men.

"Death to the Americans! I hate them all!"

A swarthy fist crashed down upon the table top, the candle flame leaped, casting an eerie, flickering light upon the speaker's face. A dark face, with high cheekbones and cruel lips parted to show discolored teeth—an ugly vision of malignant hatred, inflamed by wine.

"In the name of the saints, Diaz," said one of his drinking companions, anxiously, "be careful what you shout so loudly, with all these Americans about."

Some doughboys, lining the copper-topped bar, must have understood a little Spanish. They started angrily toward the party of three.

With a howl of rage, Diaz arose. In his hand, a knife glittered. One American seized a wine bottle, another a heavy broom. The wine shop was in turmoil.

At that instant, a rather slight young man in civilian clothes threw himself at Diaz, pouring forth a torrent of Spanish. Amazed. Diaz stood weaving in his tracks, then slowly put up

the knife and sat down again with his white-faced companions. The man who had so miraculously cooled his rage, turned to the surprised doughboys.

"You're a helluva lot of wiseguys!" he remarked. "Getting into trouble in the only place for blocks where we can get a drink! D'you wanta bring in the M.P.'s?"

At that psychological moment, Yvette, the barmaid, invited "tous les braves soldats Americains" to drink on the house. That was so unusual that the versatile peacemaker was unnoticed as he rejoined Diaz and his two friends.

"Come, drink with us," Diaz cried. "Drink the good rich Beaune wine, and forget troubles, even"—this time he lowered his voice—"the accursed Yankees."

So, around the candle, warmed by red Beaune wine, they talked, always in Spanish.

Two of the four were Spanish, brought to France by the Americans to help complete the great building projects that made up the Services of Supply, to include a large base hospital at Beaune. The third was a Frenchman, invalid out of the army, but with radical political leanings.

Their new friend had not only lived in Spain, but he knew so many languages that the American Red Cross had hired him as an interpreter for the thousands of laborers of all nations imported to Beaune. His name was Pietro, he liked wine, cards, and dice; yet, he drank and gambled without losing his head. So it appeared.

Diaz was noisy and quarrelsome, but the newcomer seemed to like him.

"I could easily see, amigo," Pietro said, "that you were a Spanish aristocrat. Naturally, these doughboys irritate you. But, is there no other reason?"

Diaz's bloodshot eyes searched Pietro's youthful face. He poured himself another drink, then explained with a venomous voice:

"I was born in Cuba, of an influential family. But when it was conquered by Americans in 1898, they made us go back to Spain. I was drafted into the army, and when I would not obey low-class sergeants, the colonel ordered me flogged.

"That night I slipped into his quarters and thrust my knife into his heart. Then I fled here to France to work for these Americans who I hate—but only to get revenge."

The men got on so well together that night they agreed to meet again. When the evening ended, Pietro watched his three new friends stagger off down the cobblestoned street of Beaune until they disappeared around a corner. Then he went quickly in the other direction, turned into a slot of an alley, ran up a flight of arched-over stairs, and rapped on the door softly three times. As the door opened a voice from the inside spoke, "Well, sergeant, you're late. Anything doing?"

"Yes sir, there's something going on," replied Pietro. "I've just spent hours drinking with Diaz and his friends."

A gesture from the questioner's flashlight revealed the uniform and shoulder bars of captain in the American Army. "Are they up to something?"

"They may be," Pietro replied. "Diaz is a bad actor, but when he drinks, he talks."

Then he told in detail what had happened.

"That's fine!" the captain said. "But watch yourself. I don't want to lose my best I.P. If you get away with this, I'll recommend you for the Distinguished Service Medal."

The initials I.P. were short for the Corps of "Intelligence Police;" a group of enlisted counterintelligence specialists introduced into the American Expeditionary Force in the fall of 1917 for the purpose of protecting the American Army from enemy espionage, sabotage, and subversion. The corps stood at less than 400 men overseas, many of whom were multilingual and were, for the most part, unknown by the rest of the Army because of their mission.

Pietro, in real life Sergeant Peter de Pasqua, was one of the best I.P.'s that the corps had. However, for the moment, Pietro had only one concern; he must work his way into the confidence of three men with a fanatical hatred of the American Army of

*A group photo of AEF, Counter Intelligence Police; Peter de Pasqua standing on 3d row, 1st left (U.S. Army photo)*

which he was a part. And they were not bluffing, especially Diaz, in what they would do to the hated Americans.

"Kill, burn, destroy," they cried. But what, exactly, wondered Pietro, were their plans?

It took Pietro many nights over cards and dice and red Beaune wine to find out. He had to invent grievances against the Americans and curse them foully. Then came a night when no Americans were in the cafe, only the three plotters and Pietro. Diaz was in a black mood, restless, brooding. Finally, he said in a low voice, "Pietro, you're a good fellow. Can you get hold of an American mail censor's stamp?"

"For you, compadre, I would do anything," Pietro replied. "But why?"

"I'll tell you," Diaz said, at last. "I am here as an agent of the chief of the German Secret Service in northern Spain. I have sent him two reports already, but I don't know whether he has received them. Now, if I write a letter, and you stamp the envelope with the American stamp, 'Passed as Censored,' it will go right through."

"Consider it done, compadre?" cried Pietro. "Write your letter."

That night Pietro and his captain read an impassioned offer to steal and send to the German chief a map of Beaune and plans of all the American works going on there, including the new base hospital which would be bombed, if not by German airplanes, then by Diaz and his comrades. Would the German chief send instructions? And secret ink?

"We'll send this German's name and address to Major Moreno at G.H.Q.," said the captain, carefully resealing the letter. "Now, you go ahead and join in with their plots and see what you can find out."

So, in another secret session around the Beaune bottle, Pietro confided that he could supply a skeleton key to fit the door admitting to the hospital. That very night, he promised he would draw away the American sentry while Diaz stole the plans. Diaz agreed enthusiastically.

Pietro's patience was soon rewarded. Diaz's success in stealing the plans with the assistance of Pietro only whetted his appetite. The next night, he craved still more action.

"If our good friend Pietro will once more borrow that censor's stamp," he said, "we'll send the plans to the German chief."

Pietro promised. In good humor, Diaz called for wine. Then, when the bottle was before him, he whipped out his knife.

"Let us take an oath!" he cried. He jabbed the knife into his wrist. The blood trickled upon the tabletop. "An oath of compadres, an oath in blood! Death to the Americans!"

He snatched Pietro's fountain pen, and with a gruesome mixture of red blood and black ink, scrawled upon a sheet of paper: "Death to the Americans!" Beneath, he signed his name. Then he forced each of the others to dip the pen into the gobbet of blood on the table top and sign their names. After the oath was taken and the wine drunk by all at the table, Diaz unfolded his new plan—blowing up a large French munition dump located near Beaune. Pietro knew at once that the French counterespionage service would have to be brought into the case. Later, when a French official was sent for by the Americans, he was not at first convinced that an actual conspiracy existed. Only after talking directly with Pietro himself were his doubts removed.

As in the past, Pietro and the three conspirators met for a final planning session at the little bistro. They talked for a few moments, but that was difficult, for there seemed to be more customers than usual—Frenchmen mostly. Diaz grumbled about it. However, as one of them passed behind him, suspicion dawned in Diaz's mind. He started to his feet, but suddenly toppled to the floor unconscious, a victim of one of the French authorities' blackjacks.

A few days later, on 16 June 1918, Sergeant Peter de Pasqua emerged from his role as Pietro long enough to receive the Citation for Meritorious Service, an award newly created by General Pershing. It is believed that de Pasqua was the first member of the Corps of Intelligence Police to be so recognized, but he would not be the last. Instead, he would be followed by generations of counterintelligence specialists who would earn the gratitude of the nation and the Army they served.

## *The Rest of the Story:*

There are questions that remain. Whatever happened to the Distinguished Service Medal promised by de Pasqua's commander? Sergeant Peter de Pasqua himself? And the fledgling Corps of Intelligence Police? The Distinguished Service Medal, along with the Medal of Honor, could only be awarded for combat duty, and apparently, it was determined that the mission of de Pasqua, however dangerous and gallant, did not constitute combat service. But the future held some compensation. On 22 February 1932, the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth, the War Department declared that members of the Army who had been wounded in any previous war were eligible for the Purple Heart along with those soldiers who had been awarded the Citation for Meritorious Service in World War I. At last, Sergeant Peter de Pasqua had his decoration.

For the duration of the war, Peter de Pasqua continued to play his role as an interpreter for the Red Cross, always alert for possible enemy agents. But between serving as a Red Cross interpreter and counterspy, there was time for courting the daughter of the owner of the cafe where he normally ate his meals. To prove his ability to keep secrets, Pietro, as his fiance knew him, surprised her by appearing at their wedding dressed in the uniform of an American Expeditionary Force sergeant along with a different name. After the war, de Pasqua and his new bride remained in Paris where he became a manager for a major United States shipping line.

There was a future for the Corps of Intelligence Police as well. It would become a mainstay in the Army, performing many of the same counterintelligence functions it had with the American Expeditionary Force in World War I; and in 1942, would change its name to the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC), eventually becoming one of the predecessors of today's U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command.

# The Day I Died!

*By Henry P. Chapman*

*Officially and on the records, the photogunner of the B-17 was killed in action.*

It was October 21, 1942. The B-17 Flying Fortress in which I was a photogunner circled patiently in the morning sky waiting for the rest of the squadron to become airborne. Three thousand feet below, a faded gray veil of North Sea fog was untangling itself from England's barbed coastline.

Across the channel, France's peninsulas poked out into the choppy water like giant bayonets. Tucked in the estuary of the Blavet River in one of those peninsulas was our target for the day—the Nazi submarine pens at Lorient.

After the forts from the four squadrons of our group had completed their rendezvous and had stacked up in a diamond formation, they pointed their props toward France. Immediately they reached for altitude. Inside the bomb bays were 1,000-pound bombs.

At 6,000 feet we put on oxygen masks. Goggled eyes began sweeping the sky for specks that in a few seconds could barrel down and become bullet-spraying Messerschmitts and Focke-Wulfs.

We climbed higher. Ten thousand feet now. The fortresses shuddered as GI gunners in the belly, tail, and ball turrets ripped off short bursts to test-fire their guns.

The crate-sized K-17 camera that I was to operate over the target was stuck in a camera-well in the floor of the radio room immediately behind the bomb bay. Above me was my anti-Nazi insurance policy—a .50 caliber machinegun.

The formation was at 23,000 feet as we approached the Brittany peninsula. Our target was located in its underbelly. At the briefing that morning we had been informed by the S-2 officer that subpens at Lorient were made of reinforced concrete; that the target area was lousy with ack-ack guns; and that we were sure to run into enemy fighters—most likely the best of Goering's Luftwaffe.

*B-17 in flight (U.S. Army photo)*

However, my mind wasn't on subs nor targets nor enemy aircraft. As I looked down at the Brittany mountains, I felt thrilled that I was seeing France. From that altitude it wasn't distinguishable from other places I had seen, but I had heard too much about France not to get excited at the sight of it—even if it was from 4 miles up.

And though my nose and mouth were stuffed inside an oxygen mask, I smelled apples and tasted apple cider. My memory brought on the pleasant sensation as I recalled my fifth grade teacher describing the mellow aroma of Brittany apples and the smacking tang of Brittany cider.

"Enemy fighters!" snapped a voice over my headphones. "Ten o'clock high!"

My head jerked up. Already the enemy planes were close enough to be categorized—FW-190's and ME-109's. Tongues of orange flames lapped at us from the charging fighters' guns. Fortress .50's pumped lead. Red tracers scratched livid gashes across the heavens. The nostalgic fragrance of apples in my nostrils was dissipated by the pungent smell of burned cordite. The taste of cider soured into vinegar.

Behind our plane a ball of fire blossomed with the suddenness of a thunderbolt.

"I got one!" The tail gunner's excitement twanged over the intercom and into our earphones. Instinctively, we all cheered.

With every spin of the props more enemy planes pounced on us. They came from every which way—yellow-nosed ones, red-nosed ones, and blue-nosed ones. Their 20-mm cannon shells whacked our Fortresses and tore through the bombers' thin skins, but our formation marched on in perfect aerial step.

I saw another Nazi fighter get hit. Its wing broke off and the crazy way it fell through the sky reminded me of a redtailed hawk I'd shot down on the ranch back in New Mexico when I was a kid. On the way down the wounded FW-190 rammed into another bird of the same feather, and both planes plunged earthward locked in a flaming embrace.

Then the swarm of enemy fighters withdrew. No, they weren't licked. They were just getting out of the way of their antiaircraft guns, which began reaching up for us seconds later. Black puffs polka-dotted the heavens as the ack-ack shells popped all around us. Our Fortresses, packed tight, pushed toward the target.

My earphones informed me that we were approaching the sub-pens at Lorient. I abandoned my machinegun post and squatted over the camera-well. The bomb bay doors opened. I began taking pictures.

Bombs dropped by the squadron in the first element were mushrooming below. Our Fortress lurched slightly and I knew that our bombs were away.

Out in the Bay of Biscay I could see geysers of water fountaining upward. Those were the bombs which had missed the target. I also saw fire, smoke, and dust boiling from the estuary. Those were the 1,000-pounders which had not missed.

With Nazi ack-ack chasing us, we banked northward toward England. That was when one of the enemy 88's reached up and ripped a hunk off our B-17's fuselage. A sudden and violent gulp of air sucked me toward the opened gash, and the last thing I remembered was hitting my head on the fuselage frame on the way out into space. I had a chute on—but I couldn't pull the ripcord because I was knocked out cold.

After the squadron returned to England, I later found out, they reported that they had followed my fall until I was obliterated by smoke blowing from the target area. They reported that my chute had not opened. On the records I was K.I.A.—Killed In Action.

Officially, October 21, 1942, was the day I died. Actually, that was the day I was reborn.

I woke up with the fragrance of apples in my nostrils and the taste of zesty apple cider on my lips—Brittany apples and Brittany cider. This was also actual. I was in a Breton apple farmer's home, and the liquid that helped revive me was homemade apple cider.

The Frenchman's daughter, Jeanne, who spoke more English than I spoke French, told me that her father had found me unconscious in his apple orchard. Worriedly, I inquired about my parachute. Jeanne informed me her father had gathered it up and buried it so that the Nazi search patrols would not find it.

"The chute was opened?"

"Of course," she said. "But even so, you must have fallen on your head and cut it quite seriously." She apologized for the amateurish bandage she'd made.

I told her what had happened in the plane and how I had banged my head when I was dragged out by suction.

"But if you were unconscious on the way down, then who—"

"Yeah," I interrupted, "who pulled the ripcord to open my chute?"

Jeanne and I looked toward her father for an answer. He poured golden apple cider into my empty cup. Then he removed his beret.

"The arm of God," he said, "has a long reach."

*B-17's "Flying Fortress" over enemy territory (U.S. Army photo)*

# The Capture of the German Rocket Secrets

*By Norman Beasley*

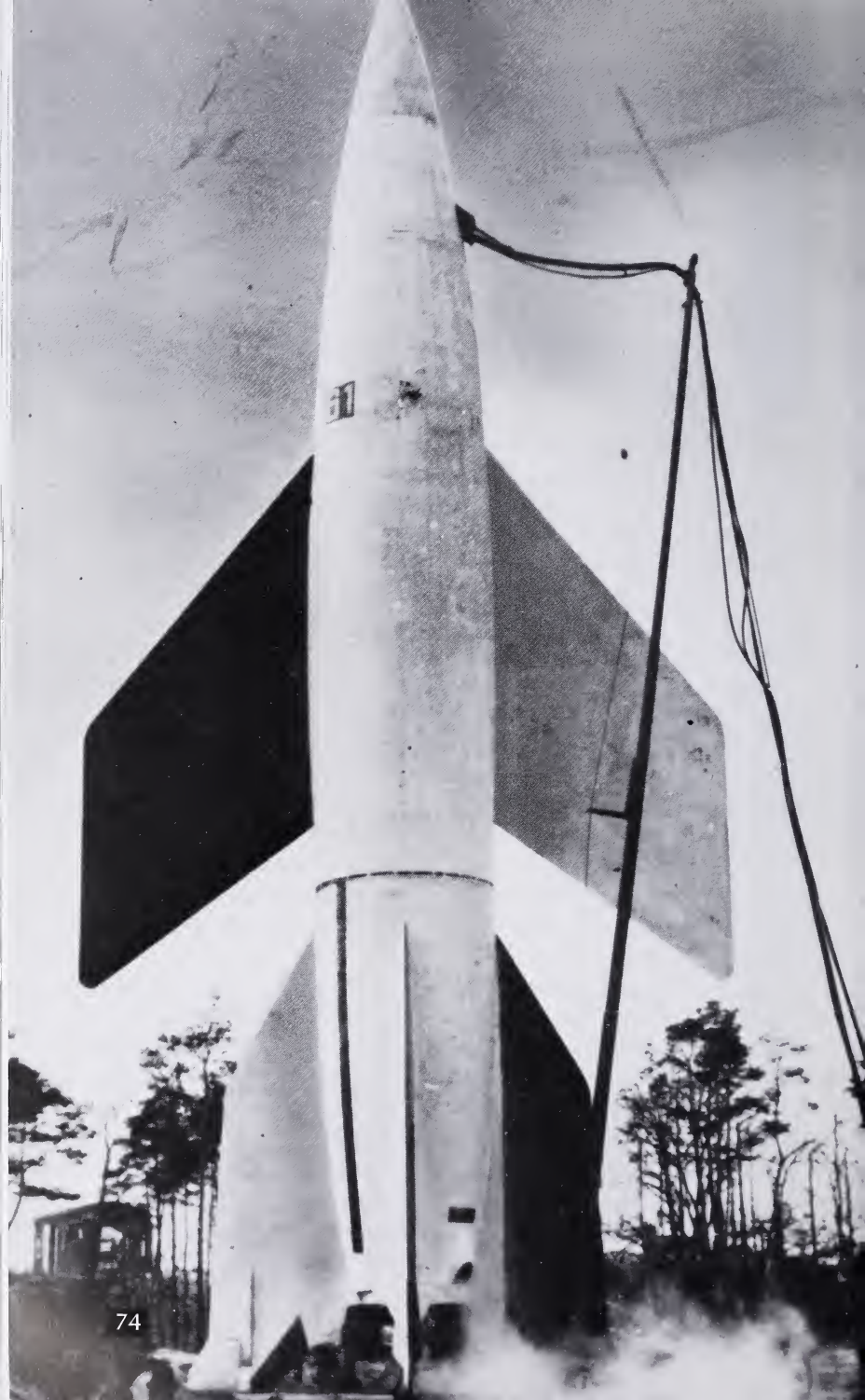
*Norman Beasley tells the story of his brother, the late Colonel Peter Beasley, who died shortly after this article was completed.*

In February 1945, Peter Beasley, then a U.S. Army colonel, was summoned to Washington from the battlefields of Europe. Along with other chosen intelligence units, he was charged by Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, with (1) the capture of the Speer Ministry, developer of Germany's rocket weapons; (2) the capture of all possible intelligence pertaining to rocket weapons; and (3) the render of a documented report on the effects of Allied bombing of German industry.

Early in 1929, German engineers had begun studying rocket and jet propulsion to be used for transporting mail. In 1933, when Adolf Hitler became Chancellor, these studies were shifted to military uses, and the scientists were instructed to explore all ideas, however fanciful. Professor Dr. Wernher von Braun, technical director of the group of scientists employed by the Speer Ministry on rocket research, was continued in that capacity. Huge sums were made available to the ministry and huge sums were wasted, but the research produced weapons, the best known of which were the V-1 and V-2 missiles.

The V-1 flying bomb was developed in the Volkswagen works in Fallersleben and produced in quantity at three plants: Mittelwerke in Nordhausen, Bruns Werge in Stettin, and in Fallersleben. When launched against England in June 1944, the Germans had about 12,000 of these missiles on hand. Approximately 25 percent of them were defective.

Peenemunde, on the Baltic Sea, was the nerve center of the V-2 rocket program. Following a devastating air attack by the British in August 1943, the German Ministry for Armament and War Production moved the V-2 rocket underground. The place



chosen was Nordhausen in central Germany. Production began in February 1944.

When the European phase of World War II ended in May 1945, the V-1 and V-2 missiles were in full production. The V-2 was an extraordinary weapon. Developed over a period of 10 years, the work on it had progressed by the war's end so that it had a range of more than 200 miles and a maximum speed of 3,500 miles an hour. It was so fast that it could not be seen by the human eye nor by radar. Consequently it was able to land on its target before the rumble of its approach could be heard. Fortunately for England, the war ended before many were used, although in London, Selfridge's department store was hit as was the Piccadilly Theatre, a railroad station, and a number of dwellings in the residential section.

Fortunately for the United States and Canada, the A-9 was no further along than the blueprint stage. This weapon was designed as a winged V-2. It was to carry a crew, be equipped with pressurized cabins, a retracting undercarriage, and special aerodynamic aids for landing. Its range was more than 3,000 miles, and its anticipated speed more than 3,500 miles an hour.

The Speer Ministry was headquartered in Berlin, but under the pressure of bombing from the air and the steady advance of Allied ground forces, its personnel were scattered into the Black Forest and the protection of the Alps. Through intelligence sources, Washington and London knew of the dispersal and of the burning of all but key documents. Not known was the whereabouts of the Speer personnel and the hiding places for these key documents.

In March 1945, the town of Bad Eilsen was captured. Located about 20 miles from Hanover, Bad Eilsen was the headquarters of Focke-Wulfe, one of the two largest manufacturers of fighter aircraft in Germany. In the town were two or three hotels that housed some 1,500 engineers and technical people assigned to the Focke-Wulfe Company.

Following right behind the advancing Allies was Colonel Beasley, under orders from Washington. His cadre comprised two other commissioned officers and two sergeants, one of the latter especially fluent in German.

*German V-2 Rocket Bomb with wings (U.S. Army photo)*

After days of interrogation, Focke-Wulfe officials admitted possessing key drawings and records. They had hidden them in the basement walls of one of the buildings. The documents and drawings were sent to the headquarters of General Eisenhower. From Bad Eilsen, the search party moved on to Kassel where the Fieseler aircraft was made, but not without an ominous warning. A soldier who had been detailed to guard the colonel's airplane (a C-47) was found tied to a tree, stabbed to death.

In Kassel, the officials of Fieseler were interrogated. Their replies, matching with the answers given by the Focke-Wulfe officials, caused Colonel Beasley to suspect that members of the Speer Ministry were hiding in that general area and that key records of German missile weapons had also been hidden nearby.

He requested, and was given, permission from American authorities to search the depths of the Harz Mountains and the Black Forest. Early in April he took over a barracks in Ilfeld, a town a few miles north of Nordhausen. Unknowingly, he had commandeered the same barracks that had been occupied by George Richkey, the director general of all German rocket weapons production. The next morning Colonel Beasley and his party set out to explore the countryside.

Without trouble they located the Mittelwerke underground plant between Ilfeld and Nordhausen, where a large percentage of all the V-1's and V-2's were made. Located in a hill, the underground plant was 800 to 1,000 feet beneath surface. There were two tunnels, each 2 miles long, 32 feet wide, and 35 feet high. The two tunnels were situated about one-half mile from each other. Connecting them were some 40 other tunnels, each again about 32 feet wide and 35 feet high.

In one tunnel, the north end was used by Junkers to manufacture airplane engines; the other end for the manufacturing, assembling, and shipping of V-1's. The north end of the second tunnel was used as a general machine shop; the south end for the manufacturing, assembling, and shipping of V-2's. The office of the Mittelwerke was partly underground at the plant, but largely in a former hospital at Ilfeld—a building covered with Red Cross markings.

The premises were carefully searched for documents or clues. None was found, although a pile of ashes disclosed the spot in the courtyard where records had been burned, probably within

2 or 3 days. Satisfied that there was no need for further search in the Mittelwerke surroundings, the intelligence group began poking into the mountains adjacent to Ilfeld.

Possessing no information, and operating on no plan, they traveled every side road, crossroad, and main road within a radius of 50 miles of Ilfeld. The group questioned many people, patrolled the roads every night until 1 a.m., and took turns standing guard at their own barracks.

It was still several weeks before V-E Day; the forest gave protection to thousands of fugitive German soldiers. Disorganized though the search seemed, it was really systematic. Convinced that members of the Speer Ministry were hiding in the area, Colonel Beasley decided the most likely place was a town called Blankenburg, about 40 miles from Ilfeld. ''In Blankenburg,'' the colonel wrote in his official report, ''we found a school building with some miscellaneous papers bearing the Speer Ministry insignia....

"I felt sure someone who knew something about construction would be charged with hiding the records because if the Germans were successful in recapturing the area then they would have the records in shape for immediate use. I also had a hunch that when they hid the records they had done so in significant batches. If we could find them we would obtain a cross section of the entire Ministry....

"I made daily visits to the jails in the small towns to see if I could locate anyone who might interest me. After a couple of weeks, a part of a heavy tank company moved into Blankenburg and unearthed a German who knew something about construction. I took the man off the job to which he had been assigned, placed him under arrest, and began to interrogate him. I figured I had nothing to lose by taking the position that I knew who he was and all about him. This tactic brought unexpected results....

"It developed that he had been in the construction section of the Speer Ministry. As a second shot in the dark, I told him I knew he was charged with the building of a place and the hiding of the records of the Speer Ministry in a cave in the mountains not more than 10 miles from Blankenburg. I told him that inasmuch as he was a German, he could use his own judgment as to what he cared to tell me. I could only promise him an attempt at protection. I could place him in custody, and try to look after

him, but would not guarantee that he would not be assassinated if it was learned what he had done....

"He thought the matter over and told me he would show me where the records were. I immediately got an escort of half a dozen GI's armed with tommyguns and started to drive right out of town. We went about 7 miles. During this period, he kept looking at me every once in a while. Finally, he said: 'Turn off the road to the right.'

"We drove into the forest about three-quarters of a mile, came up over a little knoll, stopped, and he said the cave was right in front of us. I saw it at once and also could see it had been opened. He jumped out of the car in great agitation and ran to the cave. Meanwhile, I noticed people living in a little hut. I asked them if they had seen anyone at this cave. They said some Americans had been there a few days before. I then went into a town called Huttenrode, which was nearby, and there found a few members of a tank company....

"In the yard behind the house the soldiers were occupying and in a big pile beside a chicken coop were records of the Speer Ministry! Luckily, there had been no rain for several days, and the records were in excellent condition. The German construction man was visibly relieved and said that when we found an empty cave he was convinced I would have him shot. I took him, and the papers, back to Ilfeld and put him to work tabulating and translating them. While the records were extremely important, we needed the top personnel of the Speer Ministry to decipher and analyze them....

"I continued my day-to-day visits to the jails, particularly the Blankenburg jail which the tank company kept filled with constantly changing personnel. In this jail I finally found Dr. Frank, Herr Nagel, and Dr. Bohn, three of the top people in the Speer Ministry. Dr. Frank was administrative head, and a lieutenant colonel; Herr Nagel was head of motor transportation for all Germany, and a lieutenant general; Dr. Bohn was chief personnel officer. All three had worked with Dr. Speer in various agencies of the German Government in addition to being with him in his architectural business before he entered the government....

"Taking the three men to Ilfeld, I began to question them. Beginning cautiously, I soon discovered a weakness that was common to almost every German "big-shot" we caught—they were

steeped in fear, the result of living in the shadow of the Gestapo. Fearful of resisting authority, it was simply a matter of getting the right information from them. With little hesitation, Dr. Frank said he would show me where the Speer records were hidden. He insisted, however, that he would not do so until after dark and then only if accompanied by armed guards....

"I agreed, and asked him to put down the location of the hiding place and directions on how to get there. He did. The place was the same place and the cave the same cave we had visited. I then asked him to describe the records, how they were tied, how they were packed, and what they were packed in, explaining that I needed this information for purposes of identification. Suggesting I would like to have him write out this information and that he inform Herr Nagel and Dr. Bohn of what he had told me, I took him into an adjoining room where all the records were piled in orderly fashion....

"Astonishment spread over his face as he identified the orderly stacks. Expressing my pleasure over the good start he had made by telling me the truth about where the records had been hidden, I told him I wanted him and his two compatriots to analyze, tabulate, and prepare a full breakdown of what we had captured. In Ilfeld we found four stenographers, three of whom spoke English. Borrowing typewriters from the V-2 factory, I put the three captives to work."

Among the records was found a letter addressed to a retired lieutenant colonel in which it was stated that he would be receiving certain records which he was to place in the safe in his hunting lodge in the Black Forest. Colonel Beasley and one of the sergeants in his group set out to find the lodge—and did, just before dark on the same day. The retired lieutenant colonel, now in his 80's, denied knowledge of having received any records but, upon seeing the letter, dug out the key to the basement from the dirt in a flowerbox beside the entrance to the lodge. The safe containing the records was in the basement.

The records were important, as they provided an analysis of the ability of Germany and German-held countries, as well as enemy countries, to wage war. There were statistics dealing with the raw materials available to Germany and her enemies

*American soldiers around German guided missile (U.S. Army photo)*

throughout the world. The records were very much up to date, in fact, up to February 1945.

In one of many talks with Dr. Frank, Colonel Beasely inquired if there were other records dealing with the Speer Ministry that would be of interest. After some hesitation Dr. Frank said that Dr. Speer had sent him all his personal records together with other records which he, Dr. Frank, had not looked at—and he would be willing to show where the papers were hidden.

A day later, Colonel Beasley went with Dr. Frank to a hamlet in the mountains about 60 miles from Ilfeld. In a farm house on the edge of the hamlet, Dr. Frank turned over all the personal papers of Dr. Speer—his decorations, his letters to Hitler, Hitler's letters to him, and complete records on file cards (24 boxes in all) of the damage to Berlin, by factory, by percentage of damage, by cause—the records being complete through March 1945. Also among the records were complete drawings for the rebuilding of Berlin should the city be destroyed by bombing. They had been prepared by the Speer Architectural Company and carried a date prior to September 1, 1939; the day Hitler declared war on Poland.

Meanwhile, Colonel Beasley had set about tracing the whereabouts of George Richkey, the director general of all rocket weapons production. A report came in that Richkey was working in a salt mine 90 miles distant. Two officers, detailed to find Richkey, returned with him late that same day.

"It was a most profitable catch," reported Colonel Beasley. "A nervous little man, who smoked incesssantly and always brought the conversation back to scientific or technical matters, Richkey asserted he was pro-American, having two brothers in the United States. He rolled his eyes in frequent agitation during the first talk, clearly expecting the worst, and showed me a letter from the Third Army stating he had been interrogated and permitted to continue his work."

"You mean you were permitted to continue your work for the salt company?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you tell the officer who interrogated you that you had been director general of the rocket weapons program?"

"No, sir."

"Did he ask?"

"No. sir."

"In other words you just told him your name was George Richkey, that you were an engineer or something like that, and you were working for the salt company?"

"Yes, sir."

"I've got a different kind of job for you. I want you to begin right now writing out a full description of yourself, all your activities, all the activities of the V-2 factory, and what your people were working at—everything! In a few minutes you will be given a list of subjects I want covered."

When Richkey's report was completed he was again interrogated. This time Colonel Beasley made it clear that, "we accept you as an official of the German Government; we have patience and time and lots of people—you have lost the war and, so as far as I am concerned, you are a man who knows a lot about rockets. As an American officer, I want my country to have full possession of all your knowledge. To my superiors, I shall recommend that you be taken to the United States."

Richkey vigorously nodded his assent, explained he was a scientist and wanted only to develop his knowledge in pleasant surroundings, such as existed in the United States, as told him by his brothers.

"Right now I want you to tell me where the V-2 records are hidden," interrupted Colonel Beasley.

Richkey agreed to tell where the records were hidden, and to show the colonel the place—"after dark, and with plenty of guards." He said the records were complete "in every detail of the entire rocket weapons program as to production problems, experiments, plans—everything is there and everything was packed under my supervision." He said that he had personally taken the records by truck to the cave where they were hidden; that he changed drivers three times; and that, subsequently, all three drivers were liquidated.

Instead of going after dark, as Richkey wished, Colonel Beasley, with Richkey beside him, set out for the cave. Accompanying them was a heavily armed escort. In the Black Forest, approximately 5 miles from Ilfeld, in a cave about 5 feet wide and 5 feet high, running 300 feet into the side of a mountain, the records were found intact. They were taken to the headquarters of a nearby armored division and placed in a special room with a 24-hour guard.

*Captured German V-2 Rocket Bomb (U.S. Army photo)*

Upon examination, they disclosed basic blueprints, work sheets, engineering tables, and advance plans for virtually every secret weapon in the possession of German scientists.

In many ways—especially as it pertained to rockets—it was the most important capture of the war. Without them, American scientists would have been compelled to spend months, or years, of research to reach a similar level of knowledge and the present-day space program would have been long delayed.

With the capture of the master records of the secret weapons program, Colonel Beasley's mission was completed. Except for Dr. Wernher von Braun who had escaped, the top figures in the Speer Ministry and the records of the ministry (a paper capture weighing 5,000 pounds) were in the colonel's possession. A few days later Dr. von Braun was picked up by Lieutenant Robert C. Stanley, of the 44th Reconnaissance Troop of the U.S. Army, in

one of the narrow, dead end roads between the towns of Imst and Landeck near the Italian border. Lieutenant Stanley found the German scientist in a chalet, along with a number of test pilots and mechanics. Certain pieces of equipment, including the jet rocket aircraft, were located on the chalet grounds. All were moved to the rear and turned over to the 324th Infantry Regiment.

In his official report, released by the Department of Defense, Colonel Beasley wrote about his arrival at Headquarters in France:

"...Robert Lovett, Assistant Secretary of War for Air, happened to be with the general (Spaatz) when I arrived and showed an interest in my booty.... A few days after I left, the Harz Mountain area was turned over to the Russians for occupation. American capture of the vital secret weapons documents was particulary timely."

# The Toughest, Deadliest Hombre

*By David Atlee Phillips*

Everyone else in the convention hall suddenly dwindled in stature when Carl Eifler walked into the group. The setting was the first reunion in 1975 of the Association of Former Intelligence Officers in Alexandria, Virginia. Although I had never met the legendary colonel who commanded the O.S.S. Burma 101 Detachment, I knew he would attend the convention. My friend Lee Echols—Eifler's sidekick during almost five adventurous decades—had written to say he and Eifler would fly in from California.

The illusion that others in the gathering had shrunk when Eifler entered the hall was generated not only because of Eifler's imposing physical bulk, but also because of the immensity of his presence, a bigness which went beyond the dimensions of his huge physical frame, making him stand above the crowd.

"An enormous mass of a man with a temper as big as his hulk," recalls O.S.S. veteran and historian Stanley Lovell. "He could fly an airplane, box better than most pros, and few marksmen with pistol or carbine ever have matched his record. Beyond any doubt the toughest, deadliest hombre in the whole O.S.S. menagerie."

One of the first recruits to join O.S.S. in Asia was Thomas N. Moon, later to co-author Eifler's biography, *The Deadliest Colonel*. "I came under his command as a 19-year-old sergeant detached from the Army," Moon remembers. "To say he scared the hell out of me would be an understatement—but then I had plenty of company. 'Colonel Thundercloud,' as we often called him, was a legend."

More than 30 years later I was scared, too, shortly after I met Eifler. During the convention of ex-intelligence people Eifler collapsed, his giant body crashing to the floor. Several of us rushed to assist him. But Eifler glared at us, waving assistance away, determined to defy, alone, the seizure which had felled him.

Slowly, very slowly, he raised himself from the floor until he stood erect, breathing heavily.

Then Eifler went about his business. Later, I learned that episode was only one of many skirmishes with physical and mental infirmity Carl Eifler had fought, and conquered, over the years.

Lee Echols was on the trail of bootleggers in Newport Beach, California, in 1928 when police patrolman Carl Eifler stopped his automobile. "He was a huge, swaggering young man," Echols recalls. When asked to identify himself Echols told Eifler he was a customs patrol inspector on the Mexican border.

"How do you get into that outfit?" Eifler asked. Echols said his chief hired agents who were at least 6 feet tall, weighed 200 pounds or more, and were 35 years old. Eifler met the first two criteria, but was underage.

Not being old enough had led Eifler to his job as a patrolman and the encounter with Echols. Eifler's father erected derricks in the California oil fields; young Eifler grew up among the rough-and-tough roustabouts. A restless youth seeking action, Eifler dropped out of school when he was 13. He enlisted in the Army at 15, serving for 18 months before he was dismissed when it was learned he had lied about his age. He graduated from the Los Angeles Police Academy, but accepted an offer to resign when a record check revealed he had again concealed his age. At age 21, Eifler met the requirements of the Newport Beach Police Department, thus the meeting with Echols.

In less than a month Eifler was a customs patrol inspector, working in tandem with Lee Echols in Calexio, a partnership which has endured until the present.

"Eifler is one of the very few people I've ever worked with whom I consider absolutely fearless," Echols says now. (And Echols has worked alongside many action-oriented men during his years as a police chief, customs agent, Navy officer, O.S.S. veteran, national pistol shooting champion, and counterinsurgency expert in Latin America.) Echols recently described an incident when he and Eifler were stalking liquor smugglers in early prohibition days.

"Carl and I were on a still watch in the Tijuana River bottom when we heard the clunking of alcohol cans. We put our revolvers on 10 Mexicans coming Indian-file down a path. We searched them for weapons, found none, and began herding them toward

the customhouse. A flanker appeared from the bushes and stuck a pistol on us. He ordered us to get our hands up, and I quickly complied. Not Carl. He walked over to where the man stood with a gun, grabbed it with his left hand, and gave him such a blow in the jaw with his mighty right fist that he broke both sides of the jaw; the man's mouth was lying under his right ear. He was out for 2 days."

Eifler enlisted in the Army Reserve as a private; 6 months later he was commissioned as a second lieutenant. In that service he met a crusty, then Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Stilwell. Eifler was appointed chief customs inspector in Honolulu in 1936. In early 1941 he was called to active duty as commander of K Company of the 35th Infantry in Hawaii; often Eifler found himself in friendly competition with Captain John Couglin, who commanded L Company.

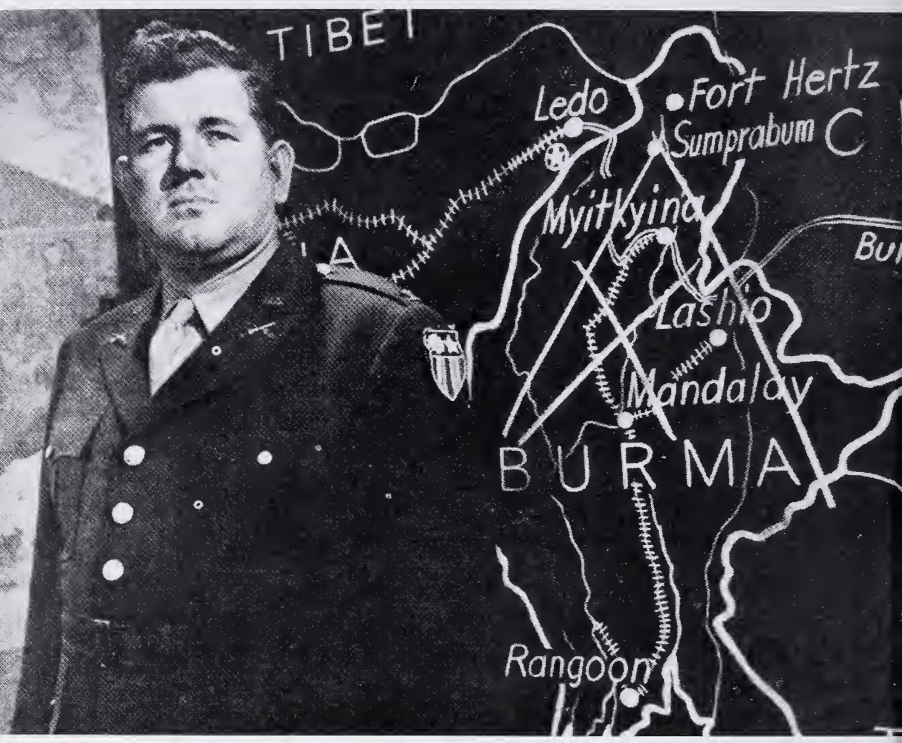
Captain Eifler had 35th Infantry duty as officer of the day at Schofield Barracks on a Sunday beginning at 1100. At his home he received an 0745 telephone call: "Captain, you'd better get up here. All hell has broken loose!"

The "hell" was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Two months later, Eifler was summoned to Washington to the headquarters of the Coordinator of Information, later known as the Office of Strategic Services—the O.S.S.

"We are sending a group of saboteurs to China," Eifler was told. "We want you to command them."

Carl Eifler had been nominated for O.S.S. Far East operations by now-General Stilwell, then fighting a diplomatic war in attempting to carry out the political objectives of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in China while concurrently stroking the constantly ruffled feathers of Chiang Kai-shek.

Lieutenant General Raymond W. Peers, USA, Retired, recently recalled his first encounter with Eifler in 1942. Peers—then a captain—expected a Pacific combat assignment when he reported for O.S.S. duty but wasn't sure what he was in for. Entering Eifler's office, Peers noted the commanding officer's "large, heavy-set frame, and apparent strength which caused me to wonder, 'what's this'? After an exchange of salutes he tried to impress me with a bone-cracking handshake. He succeeded. Then Eifler took a dagger about a foot long from his desk and drove its point into the desk top."




*Eifler in front of map showing part of his Far East Command in 1942 (Courtesy of Dr. Carl F. Eifler)*

Peers realized his combat duty would be unconventional when Eifler lectured him on sabotage, guerrilla warfare, and espionage. Eifler waved his huge right hand over a wall map which covered the area from Manchuria to Malay. "We're not sure where we'll operate," Eifler told Peers.

Peers had been recommended by John Couglin, who had been recruited for Detachment 101 service by Eifler. The three were to be responsible for one of World War II's most awesome military achievements.

In Asia, Eifler and his field commander "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell were to meet frequently. Stilwell often greeted Eifler with acerbic salutations such as "Hello, Buffalo Bill, now what the hell do you want?"

What Eifler wanted was to support Stilwell by forging Detachment 101 into a gung-ho operations unit which would help Stilwell open the road to China and, eventually, to an Allied victory in Japan. The first overseas contingent was 22 officers, a force which soon grew to more than 700 American O.S.S. men and women who would conduct espionage and intelligence operations in an area the size of Maryland. They would mobilize the Kachin Raiders—Burmese tribesmen—who would kill 5,477 Japanese troops and wound an estimated 10,000. As Eifler once told Stilwell, it was not a Boy Scout game.

In the process the Eifler legend was created. Eifler was a complex, sometimes violent man who refused to tolerate caution or incompetence in his subordinates. Those who survived his stern leadership considered Eifler a titan of unconventional warfare. He refused to listen to excuses like "it can't be done." Account of his personal courage were related around China-Burma-India campfires. Eifler piloted small aircraft in and out of remote strips behind Japanese lines where other fliers refused to fly. When a 10th Air Force plane crashed in the sea off Rangoon, Eifler uncrated a newly arrived patrol boat and rescued the downed airmen despite warnings that it was foolhardy to undertake the mission without testing the boat (the 10 men saved were among the 200 Allied airmen plucked from behind enemy lines by Detachment 101).

Eifler was frequently compelled to prove his personal courage and physical stamina, so as to leave no doubt that he was "the toughest, deadliest hombre." Often he would challenge his men to knock him off his feet with a punch to his belly—once he remained standing after the last of 77 men tried to fell him.

Newly promoted Lieutenent Colonel Eifler was as stubborn as he was tough. He refused to take medication when ill, and he relished telling doctors to go to hell. But he couldn't avoid hospitalization in the wake of a maritime mission to land agents and supplies behind Japanese lines. Jumping overboard in heavy seas to pull rubber boats through shallow shoals, Eifler was dashed repeatedly against the rocks. There were multiple abrasions on his body, and head injuries which were later diagnosed as the genesis of brain damage. He suffered long periods of pain, loss of memory and, on occasion, irrational behavior. The medics

insisted that the Detachment 101 commander remain in bed, but Eifler chafed at the confinement. He asked Stilwell to visit the hospital to decide "if the generals are running things or the goddamn doctors."

Stilwell arrived and asked, "Why are you in the hospital, Eifler?"

"I'm not sure," Eifler said, "but I think they think I'm crazy."

"Hell," Stilwell snorted, "they didn't have to hospitalize you for that. I could have told them you were crazy."

Despite any reservations he might have had, Stilwell approved Eifler's promotion. The elementary school dropout became a full colonel.

Eifler and another pilot flew into a forward camp in a light plane. The craft lacked sufficient engine power and crashed when the two men attempted takeoff. Eifler, despite his physical problems, led the other man through jungle trails, returning to safety after a 2-week trek, arriving bearded, filthy, and barefoot.

Stilwell braced Eifler once again: "Eifler, you've got to quit taking these damn fool chances."

"Sir," Eifler said, "I told you this was no Boy Scout game."

"I know, I know," Stilwell acknowledged. "But at least know the capabilities of your planes, Eifler, will you?"

Eifler, as only too aware of the inadequacies of the small de Haviland *Tiger Moths* he was flying behind Japanese lines, had requested L-10 aircraft to replace them. But that was a requisition which needed the approval of O.S.S. chief, William "Wild Bill" Donovan.

Donovan was America's most decorated and celebrated soldier, worshipped for his derring-do by those who worked with him during World Wars I and II. John Ford, the famed filmmaker, joined Detachment 101 and described Donovan to his new colleagues: "Bill Donovan is the sort of guy who thought nothing of parachuting into France, blowing up a bridge, pissing in Luftwaffe gas tanks, then dancing on the roof of the St. Regis Hotel with a German spy."

*Lt. Col. Eifler and Gen. Donovan prior to flight to Knothead Camp (Courtesy of Dr. Carl F. Eifler)*

Detachment 101 officers must have smiled—that description seemed apt for Eifler, their own chief. What would happen when the two men met, the human equation of an irresistible force meeting an immovable object?

The collision occurred when Donovan visited Burma. The O.S.S. chief had decided that the key to Allied victory in Asia might be found in the Kachin Raiders, now organized by Eifler and operating 250 miles inside Japanese territory. Donovan wanted to check reports about the seriousness of Eifler's physical condition and to evaluate opinions of some that Eifler was a weak organizer.

The two met near a wall where seven maps were displayed, each with a different plan. Donovan's biographer, Richard Dunlop (*Donovan, America's Master Spy*), writes of the encounter.

"Well, Eifler, what are you doing?"

"General Stilwell told me he might want to approach Burma in seven different ways," explained Eifler. "I was supposed to organize each of them, and I did."

"That's what I mean about you, Carl," Donovan said. "You are too god-damned ambiguous about organizing. What do you mean by organizing seven different eventualities?"

The irresistible force had collided with the immovable object.

"Sir," Eifler asked, "would you like to go behind Japanese lines and find out for yourself?"

That challenge was preposterous. Donovan, the man with more Allied secrets in his head than any person alive, would never venture into enemy-controlled territory. Preposterous.

"When do we leave?" asked Donovan.

Before takeoff the next morning Eifler offered Donovan a parachute. Donovan declined, saying he would go down with the plane if it crashed; he couldn't afford to be captured (and, in fact, he had an O.S.S. suicide pill in his pocket).

"General," Eifler said, "if we land within 15 feet of the enemy I will bring you back. Please put on your chute."

When the two heavyset men took off in the tiny plane they looked, according to one observer, "like a couple of well-fed pilots out of wings." When they landed at a forward camp Donovan enjoyed a firsthand appreciation of the capabilities of the Kachin guerrillas—and of Eifler's need for the L-10's.

The takeoff for the return flight was harrowing. Eifler coaxed his light plane into the air only by tilting its wings to thread an opening in the tree tops, and by turning up a river while it gained altitude.

When the plane landed Donovan said to Eifler, "You didn't think you were going to make it, did you?"

Eifler grinned at that. "General, I knew we'd make it. But now you see the need for more horsepower on the nose for these operations."

Was the frightening takeoff for real or was it an Eifler strategem? Whatever, Donovan approved ten L-10 planes for Detachment 101; during the 1944-45 campaigns they became widely known as the "Burma Butterflies."

### Relieved of Command

On his next visit to Eifler's headquarters Donovan told Eifler that he had a new assignment, and relieved him of command of Detachment 101. According to one version of history, Donovan was concerned about Eifler's health: "He found Eifler very ill. The 101 commander could not sleep at night and would not take the medicine prescribed by the doctors. The pain in his head had become severe." A second version is that Donovan needed Eifler for a high-risk mission behind German lines in Europe. In any event, Couglin assumed charge of Detachment 101, turning over the command to Peers a few days later.

Peers and Couglin were superb officers, and they were responsible for much of the success achieved by Detachment 101 when Eifler was in command, and for all of it after he was relieved. "But, after all," writes Lovell, "Eifler picked them to do the job and he knew in his heart, I think, that he was an impresario, a one-man act and, like Director Donovan, no great shakes as an organizer."

Before World War II ended the men and women of Detachment 101 had cleared the enemy from a 10,000 square-mile area, depriving the Japanese Fifteenth Army of the only east escape route, and secured the Stilwell Road against counterattack. The Kachin Raiders routed the Japanese, sustaining losses of only 37. General Dwight Eisenhower, in the Detachment 101 Battle

Honors citation, included the "courage and fighting spirit" of the Americans and Burmese who fought with Eifler, Peers, and Coughlin.

Eifler's O.S.S. duties were far from over. Donovan gave him sweeping authority to conduct international huggermugger missions, including exemption from the General Order which required permission from Washington for movement of personnel between theaters. Eifler traveled abroad frequently, once returning to Burma and yet another meeting with Stilwell.

When Eifler entered his tent Stilwell looked up, disdain on his face. "You, Eifler, you of all people—a goddamned brass hat!"

## Kidnapping Plot

Brass hat, maybe, but, as Echols discovered, Eifler had not become a deskbound bureaucrat. Echols was serving in naval intelligence at Mare Island (California) Navy Yard when Eifler arrived with the question, "How'd you like to go to war?" He wanted Echols to transfer to O.S.S. to work with him on a plan to kidnap a German nuclear scientist, a mission which belied the notion that Donovan considered him unfit for combat command. "Get me 10 men, none of whom you have known less than 5 years," Eifler instructed Echols, "and we'll be on our mission within 3 months."

Echols and his recruits went into training, and Eifler scouted in Switzerland to set up the abduction. But the operation was abruptly terminated when the Manhattan Project cracked the atom, obviating the need for the kidnapping. Eifler and Echols then recruited and trained Koreans to penetrate Korea and Japan as espionage agents. Four groups were training at Catalina Island when the atom bomb began to fall on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, making the mission—and the O.S.S.—unnecessary.

After the war Eifler became a very sick man. "My head injury," Eifler said recently, "was devastating, but although I suffered pain and other complexes from the onset, the injury was a time bomb

*Eifler (left) in native disguise with Indian "Pete" during his Far East years (Courtesy of Dr. Carl F. Eifler)*

that did not lay me low until 1946." Eifler spent most of that year in a hospital, and has suffered from strokes and seizures since.

In 1947 Eifler returned to duty in the customs service in Hawaii. That same year the CIA was established, and Eifler was summoned for duty with the fledgling cloak-and-dagger outfit. He agreed to recruit and lead his own band of guerrilla fighters behind the lines in Korea, but CIA doctors scotched the proposal. After examining Eifler in Washington they reported: "This man has had enough."

It appeared that Eifler would defy the doctors once again in 1952 when Donovan expected to be appointed head of CIA after Eisenhower's election. He asked Eifler to stand by, to become the agency's operations chief. Ike won the election, but Donovan, sorely disappointed, was not offered the CIA directorship.

Eifler's health deteriorated. At one point a physician described him as "a vegetable."

### Goes Back to School

Yet Eifler took on another battle, on another front, when he decided to obtain the education he had abandoned as a youth. He was rewarded with bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology and a third degree in divinity. Formerly an agnostic, Eifler "compiled a dossier" on Jesus, studied it, and found faith along with the degree. In 1963 he obtained his fourth sheepskin, the Ph.D. in psychology required for practice in California. He had maintained a straight-A average. His professor said: "He obtained his degree despite the most adverse conditions. A goodly portion of his brain was 'shot away' and wired up, he had constant tinnitus (ringing in the ears). There is no amount of stress he cannot surmount. When he is in the throes of achieving an objective there is no such thing as a knockout punch. Not bad," the professor concludes, "for someone who was decreed a vegetable 7 years prior to his school venture."

After 50 years of government service, Doctor/Colonel Eifler has dedicated himself to the practice of psychology. Much of the time, however, involves active participation in numerous veterans' organizations, such as Veterans of the O.S.S., of Detachment 101, and The Retired Officers Association (TROA) of which he is a Life Member. He organized the western sector of the Association of

Former Intelligence Officers (working again with Lee Echols) and holds a number one membership card for that group.

When I gathered opinions about Eifler from his former colleagues the word which surfaced more than any other was "complex." "I'm sure you know," said one man who knew Eifler, "that you will be writing about a most complex individual. You can take any human characteristic and he would represent both sides of the coin." Echols is not sure why Eifler is "absolutely fearless." "Now this can mean a man doesn't have enough sense to try to protect himself against disaster," Echols says, "or that he is just naturally a macho son-of-a-gun. In all the years I was with Carl, I never did figure out which of these categories he fit into."

Another man who knew Eifler wrote: "The colonel is a most complex man. He is the roughest and toughest hombre I ever met, yet the most compassionate, kind, and considerate soul I have ever known. Someone once remarked that anything you said about him was true."

Peers told me, "In one respect he always has been totally consistent—one never knows what is going to happen for certain, one cannot predict for the future."

## *The Rest of the Story:*

Today, 12 years after this story was first published, Doctor/Colonel Eifler continues to reside in his native state, California.

# Souvenir Hunting

*By Major General Hunter Liggett*

Richard H. Williams, then a captain of coast artillery, was one of a group of American officers sent abroad in August 1914 to assist Americans stranded in Europe at the outbreak of hostilities between military alliances on the Continent. Once his mission was completed, he was dispatched to Constantinople to serve as military attache. Here, he was the only attache with the Turkish Army in the Gallipoli campaign and the only American who saw, from the land side, the tragic landing of the British Army. After the British evacuated the peninsula, Williams accompanied the Bulgarian Army in its campaign against the Rumanian-Russian force.

In January 1917, Washington called him home. However, it was apparent to the German Government by that time that the United States was coming into the war against them. Williams had been studying their allies at first hand for 2 years, and they did not relish the idea of letting him get away to use his knowledge against them; but still being at peace with the United States, they could not refuse him permission to leave. They did insist, however, that he travel via Berlin, and they delayed him there for 8 days while secret agents did everything but X-ray him. When he got to Copenhagen, he found shipping suspended because of the submarine blockade. After a 3-month wait, he was about to sail on a Danish ship for Sweden when he was privately informed that a German destroyer had been alerted to stop the ship and take him off, war having been declared by the United States in the interval. The destroyer did stop the vessel and searched it painstakingly. Nevertheless, Williams shortly appeared on Swedish shores, later reaching home via Norway and a long detour by way of Iceland.

With the deployment of the American Expeditionary Force to Europe in June 1917, Washington promptly sent Colonel Williams to France to report to General Pershing at Chaumont. There, because of his exceptional advantages, he naturally went into the

intelligence section under General Nolan. He was still at Chaumont in October 1917, when the Germans launched their greatest single Zeppelin raid, sending 13 airships from Belgium against British ports and industrial centers. Two had to turn back because of motor trouble, but 11 reached England and dropped their loads. On the return they were scattered by a violent storm. Six managed to return to their base, but five froze their engines in high altitudes over France and fell prey to Allied planes, antiaircraft guns, and their own helplessness.

Two—the L-49 and L-51—were driven down almost simultaneously about 40 miles from Chaumont. The L-49 was captured intact by a party of Frenchmen, too old for military service, who were out on a boar hunt. The French prevented the crew from firing a Very pistol into the airship's envelope and destroying it by fire. The L-51 struck the earth with its forward gondola, or control car, bounced upward, struck again, and progressed across country in that fashion until eventually it wrenched the control car loose in a tree top. Once freed of its weight, the airship drifted away to be lost, with all hands, in the Mediterranean.

An excursion to Soissons to look on while Petain launched his attack on the Chemin des Dames had largely depopulated the American G.H.Q. that day. Williams was one of those who had remained behind, and he and a British general attached to the American headquarters jumped into a staff car and drove to the scene, arriving just after the crew of the control car of the L-51 had surrendered to the prideful boar hunters.

Other officers, French and American, were on the scene. Williams was told that no papers had been found in the L-51 control car or in the L-49, and the search apparently was about to be abandoned. Not satisfied with this, he suggested to his British companion that they follow the visible course of the Zeppelin along the ground as far as possible. The trail ended in a swamp and the two officers had found nothing on the way. The British

*Maj. Richard H. Williams (National Archives)*

*Richard H. Williams (8th from right, front row) taken with group from 3d Army in Coblenz, Germany (National Archives)*

general suggested that they turn back, but Williams, with characteristic doggedness, waded into the swamp and soon came across a fragment of a German map. He continued to wade, finding more fragments, until he had explored the whole area of the swamp. When he returned to the tree in which the gondola had lodged he found his companion waiting there. The latter recognized the significance of the find at a glance and was quite un-English in his excitement. Williams climbed the tree, incidentally, and found one more fragment of the map lodged in the limbs.

Working all that night with Captain Samuel T. Hubbard, Jr., in civil life a New York City cotton broker, the two succeeded in piecing the fragments together and found that they had a cross-section German code map of the North Sea, the Irish Sea, the Skagerrak, and Kattegat, with only the English Channel missing. It obviously bore an important relation to German submarine operations, but without the German code the map was more interesting than important.

During the morning, a young American officer at G.H.Q. spoke casually of having seen what he regarded as the most interesting souvenir of the war to date. Williams asked for details.

"It was a sort of album," the young man explained, "with photographs of all types of German naval vessels, heavier than air and lighter than air ships, and some printed matter."

Williams suspected at once that it was the German code book, with additions for the proper visual identification of German naval and aircraft. He ordered the officer to find the possessor and produce the book immediately. When it was brought hurriedly to headquarters, this surmise was confirmed. Two young American officers had climbed into the cabin of the L-49 soon after the boar hunters had captured it in the name of France and before intelligence officers had reached the scene. Seeing the book, one of them pocketed it instantly as a capital trophy.

With the code book in hand, the tremendous significance of the map was apparent; it was the key to the whole German submarine campaign. On Williams' request, Colonel W.D. Connor, acting chief of staff, ordered the map and code book dispatched at once to Admiral Sims at London. Captain Hubbard was made the messenger and was given a staff car and chauffeur.

After an all-night ride, Hubbard reached British headquarters at Montreuil the next morning, and assisted by General Macdonogh, chief of military intelligence of the British War Office, he crossed the Channel to Folkestone and proceeded by train to London, arriving at 11 p.m. He carried strict orders to deliver the documents only to Admiral Sims or one of his personal staff. He found that the admiral was in Paris and that his personal aide, Commander Babcock, was ill in bed in a hotel. Under the circumstances, Captain Hubbard went to the hotel, awakened Commander Babcock, ill as he was, and showed him what he carried. The commander figuratively fell out of bed, whistled his amazement and hopped to the telephone, calling British Naval Intelligence. "This is Commander Babcock, U.S.N.," Hubbard heard him say. "An officer has just arrived from American Army headquarters with extremely important documents which you should see at once."

A few minutes later two British naval officers reached the hotel, were given custody of the map and code book, and left on the double-quick for the admiralty. In the following week, before the enemy learned that his code and operations map were in the hands of the Allies, the British Navy made its greatest bag of U-boats. They always had been able to intercept enemy naval radio orders; with the code book they now could decipher the orders and, by virtue of the map, surprise numbers of submarines at various designated rendezvous.

A letter from Admiral W.R. Hall, chief of British Naval Intelligence, dated at the admiralty, October 25, 1917, to the chief of the Intelligence Section, General Staff, United States Army headquarters in France, reads:

"Commander Babcock, Admiral Sims' aide, has handed to me the important documents which you were good enough to send to Admiral Sims.

"I hasten to express to you my most grateful thanks for your kindness and promptitude in sending me this most valuable document which I assure you will be of the greatest value. You may rely that any information contained therein which will be of value to the United States Forces will be at once communicated to them."

# A Trip to the South

## *By Allan Pinkerton*

*Allan Pinkerton, founder of the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, was a well-known figure prior to the Civil War. Among the agency's successes was the thwarting of an assassination plot against President-elect Lincoln in Baltimore. In 1861, Pinkerton, under the name E.J. Allen, headed a spy network for the Union forces to obtain military information on the southern states.*

I was summoned for consultation with General McClellan. Upon reporting to his office immediately I found him awaiting my arrival, and in a few minutes I was informed of his wishes. He wanted to ascertain the general feelings of the people residing south of the Ohio River, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana; and requested that measures be at once taken to carry out his purposes.

It was essentially necessary at the outset to become acquainted with all the facts that might be of importance hereafter. No time offered such opportunities for investigations of this nature as the present, while the war movement was in its incipiency and before the lines between the opposing forces would be so closely drawn as to render traveling in the disaffected district unsafe, if not utterly impossible.

As this mission was of a character that required coolness and tact, as well as courage, and as most of my men had been detailed for duties in other sections of the rebellious country, I concluded to make the journey myself. At once I stated my intention to the general who received it with every evidence of satisfaction and approval.

My first objective point was the city of Louisville, Kentucky. Representing myself as a southern man, a resident of Georgia, I had no difficulty in engaging in conversation with the prominent men of Louisville. I decided then, from my own observations, that Kentucky would not cast her fortunes with the south, but that after the bubble of unnatural excitement had burst and

expanded itself, the loyal heart would be touched and "Old Kaintuck" would eventually keep step to the music of the Union. Results proved that I was not mistaken, and not many weeks elapsed before Union camps were established within her domain and the broad-shouldered Kentuckians were swearing allegiance to the old flag and shouldering their muskets.

Passing on undisturbed, but everywhere on the alert, and making copious notes of everything that transpired that I considered at all material to the furtherance of the loyal cause, I reached Bowling Green.

At this place I found a very decided Union sentiment. The Stars and Stripes were floating from the various buildings, and the Union men were largely in the majority. I purchased a splendid bay horse, intending to make the rest of my journey on horseback. By this means I would be better able to control my movements than if I were compelled to depend upon the railroads for transportation. I would also be able to stop at any place where I might find the necessity or a favorable opportunity for observation.

I reached Nashville, Tennessee, in due season and resolved to devote several days to my investigations. Here the disunion element was more united and outspoken. But even here, I detected evidences of Union sentiment which was none the less profound because of the danger which its utterances would have incurred. There could be no doubt that this state had resolved to cast her fortunes with the Confederacy, and the rebel General Pillow had been for some time engaged in fortifying the city of Memphis. At Nashville I met a number of officers of the rebel army, all of whom were full of enthusiasm and whose bombastic utterances in view of the eventual results seem at this time almost too absurd to be repeated. Here also I came in contact with an army surgeon whose head was full of wild quixotic schemes for destroying the northern armies by other processes than that of legitimate warfare.

One of his plans I remembered was to fill a commissary wagon with whiskey, in which had been previously mixed a generous

*Allan Pinkerton and President Lincoln (Library of Congress)*

quantity of strychnine. The wagon was then to be broken and abandoned and left upon the road so as to fall into the hands of the Union soldiers. Of course the liquor would be consumed by the finders, and the valiant doctor with evident satisfaction to himself, but to the equally evident disgust of his companions, loudly vaunted his death-dealing and barbarous scheme. This brave warrior, I learned afterward, had fled in terror at the first fire and was afterwards dishonorably dismissed from the service he was so well calculated to disgrace. So as far as I was able to learn, this grand project for wholesale slaughter of the valorous doctor received no sympathy or support from his more honorable associates; and the soldiers were able to drink their whiskey untainted with any other poisonous influences than is naturally a part of its composition.

Leaving Nashville, I spurred on in the direction of Memphis, and in due time reached the city which now presented a far different aspect than when I visited it only a few years before. Then the country was at peace. The war cloud had not burst with all its fury over a happy land, and the people were quietly pursuing their avocations.

Now the streets were filled with soldiers, some of them fully armed and equipped and others provided with but ordinary clothing and furnished with such inefficient arms as they had brought with them from their homes. A most motley gathering they were, and their awkward and irregular evolutions at this time gave but little promise of the splendid army of which they were destined in the near future to form so important a part. The work of fortifying the city had been progressing in earnest; earthworks had been thrown up all along the banks of the Mississippi, and batteries whose guns frowned threateningly upon the river were already in position.

Here to be known or suspected as a Union man was to merit certain death, and to advocate any theory of compromise between the two sections was to be exiled from the city. Rebeldom was rampant and defiant. I had some difficulty in evading the suspicions of the watchful and alert southerner who regarded all strange civilians with doubtful scrutiny, and whose "committee of safety" was ever on the *qui vive* to detect those whose actions savored in the least of a leaning towards the north. Fearlessly, however, I mingled with these men, and as I lost no opportunity

in pronouncing my views upon the righteousness of the cause of secession and belief in its certain triumph, I obtained a ready passport to the favor and confidence of the most prominent of their leaders. I talked unreservedly with the private soldier and the general officer, with the merchant and the citizen, and by all was regarded as a staunch southern man whose interests and sympathies were wedded to rebellion.

General Pillow was in command at this point, and almost every citizen was enrolled as a soldier whose services would be cheerfully and promptly rendered whenever the call should be made upon them.

Even this redoubtable chieftain was not proof against my blandishments. Little did he dream when on one occasion when he quietly sipped his brandy and water with me that he was giving valuable information to his sworn foe, and one to whom every idea gained was an advantage to the government he was attempting to destroy.

It is needless to relate the valuable items of information which I was enabled to glean upon this journey. Information which in later days was of vast importance to the union commanders, but which at this time would only burden a narrative of the events which they so ably assisted to successful results.

Here, as in many other places, I found that my best source of information were the Negroes who were employed in various capacities of a military nature which entailed hard labor. The slaves were sent by their masters, without reserve, to perform the manual labor of building earthworks and fortifications, in driving the teams, and in transporting cannon and ammunition. Led by my natural and deepseated regard for these sable bondmen, I mingled freely with them and found them ever ready to answer questions and to furnish me with every fact which I desired to possess.

Here and there I found an unassuming white man whose heart was still with the cause of the Union, but whose active sympathy could not at this time be of service to the country as he dared not utter a voice in defense of his opinions. From all these sources, I was successful in posting myself fully in regard to the movement and intentions of the rebel authorities and officers.

On the third evening of my sojourn in Memphis, my dreams of fancied security were suddenly dispelled, and I was brought face to face with the reality of danger.

I had retired early to my room, according to my general custom, and had scarcely been seated when I was disturbed by a faint but quick and distinct knocking at my door. I arose hastily, as it was something unusual for me to receive visitors after I had retired. Throwing open the door, I was somewhat surprised to see standing before me in a state of unmistakable excitement the Negro porter of the hotel.

Before I had time to question him, he sprang into the room and closed the door behind him. Jem's countenance indicated a degree of terror that immediately filled me with alarm. The news was that I had been identified by one of the Confederate soldiers who at that very moment was off to inform the general.

This was too important to be ignored. I had no desire to be captured at that time, and I had no doubt of the correctness of the porter's story. I resolved to act at once and make good my escape before it was too late. My admonitory friend was fearfully in earnest about getting me away. He quickly volunteered to procure my horse which I had quartered in close proximity to the hotel and to furnish me with a guide who would see me safely through the lines and outside of the city. Bidding Jem to make all possible haste in his movements, I gathered together my few belongings and descended the stairs and made my exit through the rear of the house. Through the faithfulness of Jem and the careful guidance of the watchful Negro he had provided me with, I was soon riding away from threatened danger. When morning broke I had proceeded far upon my way. How much service these faithful blacks had been to me I did not fully learn until some time afterwards. One of my employees, Timothy Webster, had arrived in Memphis following my departure and had learned the full particulars of the exhausting pursuit of one of Lincoln's spies who had mysteriously disappeared from the chief hotel while a guard was being detailed to effect his arrest.

I met the faithful Jem several years later when he had worked his way as a refugee from his native state and entered the Union lines in Virginia. He was soon afterwards attached to my force where he proved his devotion in a manner that was quite convincing.

After a long journey, I entered the state of Mississippi. Here rebellion and disunion were the order of the day, and a widespread determination existed to fight the cause of the south to the bitter end. Stopping one night at Grenada, I pushed on my way to Jackson, and here I resolved to remain a day or two, in order to make a thorough investigation of the place and its surroundings.

Putting up my horse, I engaged quarters for myself at the principal hotel in the city. Feeling very much fatigued by my long journey, I retired early to my room and passed a long night in refreshing sleep.

In the morning I arose about 5 o'clock, as is my general custom. I was feeling in excellent health and spirits; my journey had thus far been fully as successful as I could have desired; and safely concealed about my person I had items of value that would amply repay me for the fatigues I had undergone and the dangers I had passed. I had plans of the roads, description of the country, a pretty correct estimate of the troops and their various locations and conditions, and altogether I felt very well satisfied with myself and with the results of my mission.

As I descended the stairs, I noticed a fine soldierly officer standing in the doorway, and after bidding him a hearty good morning, I invited him to accompany me to the saloon of the hotel where we mutually indulged in a decoction as is the universal custom in southern cities. After I had obtained my breakfast, it occurred to me that before attempting any active measures for the day I owed it to myself to procure the services of a barber for a much needed shave. I had been traveling for a number of days and my face had been a stranger to a razor for a long time. I concluded that I would be more presentable if I consulted a tonsorial artist.

This was an unfortunate idea, and I soon had occasion to regret having entertained it for a moment. I would have been far more contented if I had bestowed no thoughts upon my grizzled beard and allowed nature to take its course.

Entirely unconscious, however, of what was in store for me, I entered the well-fitted saloon of the hotel and patiently waited my turn to submit myself to the deft fingers of the knight of the razor.

In response to the universal and well-understood call of "next!" I took my seat in the luxuriously upholstered chair, and

in a few minutes my face was covered with the foamy lather applied by the dapper little German into whose hands I had fallen.

I noticed when I sat down that the man wore a puzzled and speculative look, as though he was struggling with some vexing lapse of memory. As he drew the keen edge of the razor across my face, his eyes were fixed intensely upon my features. His manner annoyed me considerably, and I was at a loss to account for his strange demeanor. Whatever ideas I may have entertained with regard to this singular action were soon set at rest, only to give place to a feeling of unrestful anger.

He had just cleared one side of my face of its stubby growth of hair when a smile irradiated his face, and with a look of self-satisfied recognition and pride, he addressed me:

"How do you do, Mr. Pinkerton?"

Had a thunderbolt fallen at my feet I could not have been more perfectly amazed, and for a moment I could scarcely tell whether I was afoot or on horseback. I devoutly wished that I was anywhere than with this Dutch barber whose memory was so uncomfortably retentive.

I had been too accustomed to sudden surprises, however, to loss my self-control, and I replied to him, with an unmoved face and as stern a voice as I could command:

"I am not Mr. Pinkerton, and I don't know the man."

"Oh yes, your name is Pinkerton, and you live in Chicago."

The face of the German was so good-natured, and he appeared quite delighted at recognizing me, but for myself I was feeling very uncomfortable indeed. I did not know the man, nor what he knew of me. I knew, however, that he was perfectly right about my identity, and I knew also that it would be very dangerous for his knowledge to become general.

"I tell you I don't know the man you are speaking of," said I, sternly.

"Oh, Mr. Pinkerton," he replied, in a grieved tone, I know you well. Don't you remember me shaving you in the Sherman House in Chicago, you were a customer of mine.

The pertinacity of the man was simply exasperating. Fearing that his memory would be likely to get me into trouble, as several people were listening to our conversation, I resolved to end the

difficulty at once. Jerking the towel from around my neck and wiping the lather from the unshave portion of my face, I leapt from the chair, exclaiming angrily:

"I tell you I know nothing of your Mr. Pinkerton, or any other d—d Yankee abolitionist, and if you say another word to me upon this subject, I'll whip you on the spot!"

The barber presented a most ridiculous appearance. He was utterly frightened at my manner, and yet so convinced was he that I was the man he took me for that he appeared more amazed at my denial than at my threats of violence.

Meanwhile, the occupants of the saloon began to crowd around us, and several came in from the adjoining rooms. Turning to them with well-simulated anger, I told them the story I had invented. I lived near Augusta, Georgia, never was in Chicago, and did not know Mr. Pinkerton or any of his gang. Then I denounced the discomfitted barber in round terms and finished by inviting the entire crowd to take a drink with me.

This they all did with alacrity, and by the time they had drained their glasses, every one of the party were strong adherents of mine. We then returned to the barbershop, and so thoroughly was the crowd convinced of my truthfulness that they were eager to punish the innocent occasion of my anger. One impetuous individual wanted to hang him on sight, and his proposition was received with general favor; but finding I had succeeded in evading detection for myself, I interfered in the poor fellow's behalf and he was finally let off.

After another drink all around I managed to get away from the party, and it was not long before I was upon my horse, and traveling away from the possibility of a recurrence of such an accidental discovery. I procured a razor and shaving materials and performed that operation for myself, as I did not care to excite curiosity by exhibiting my half-shaved face to any more inquisitive barbers.

A few miles outside of the town I sold my horse. Concluding that I had obtained as much information as was desirable at that time and had already been absent from headquarters longer than I had intended, I made my way back to Cincinnati by a circuitous route. Reached there in safety, well pleased with my work, and quite rejoiced to find that General McClellan was fully satisfied with what I had learned.

# A Female in the Ranks—Alias Franklin Thompson

*By Pat Lammers and Amy Boyce*

The young woman covered her hands and face with silver nitrate, donned the clothing of a male slave, and covered her cropped hair with a black wig. With hardtack and a loaded revolver, she slipped through the cold damp night toward Rebel picket lines. The next morning she helped slaves carry breakfast to enemy soldiers and accompanied them into Yorktown to continue work on Confederate fortifications. She stood alone and idle until a young officer threatened her with 20 lashes. All day, pushing wheelbarrows full of gravel up an 8-foot incline, the gaunt youth named "Ned" worked alongside muscled black men without drawing their suspicion. After sundown she began her mission: exploring and sketching with blistered hands the fort and its cannon on a bit of paper which was deftly hidden in her shoe.

Major General George McClellan had ordered a quick replacement for a spy just captured in Richmond and about to face the firing squad. After careful consideration he and other officers approved Private Franklin Thompson, an eager candidate with an apparent knack for secrecy. The ambitious Union commanders could not have realized the irony of their selection. Their plan for deception included the art's most recent master: Sarah Emma Edmonds, alias Frank Thompson.

Born in New Brunswick, Canada, the fifth and last child born in the family, Sarah understood quickly her father's desire for sons. To gain acceptance, she began wearing boy's clothes and helping with the farm chores at the age of 6. At 10, Sarah was plowing fields and chopping wood as well as any son. She became a tomboy, an excellent rider and marksman, stubborn, determined, and reckless. When a fever struck the Edmonds

family, Sarah nursed them back to health. Her early reputation for "healing hands" would be put to good use in later years.

In a selfish attempt to keep Sarah close to him, her father arranged a marriage to their neighbor, an old farmer. Sarah's mother heard of the match and made arrangements for Sarah to run away and live with friends. She worked in a millinery shop run by the Perrigo family, until her "fiance" discovered her whereabouts. Fearing that her father would come after her, she knew she must flee. But how? A woman travelling alone would be suspected; only a man could go anywhere without question. Sarah had grown up in homespun trousers. Her favorite story had been about Fanny Camp, a female sailor, who had run away to sea dressed in men's clothing. After Fanny's example, Sarah assumed the disguise of a man. She headed toward the United States, and turned up in Connecticut selling Bibles under the alias of Franklin Thompson. In 1860, Frank was sent to Michigan by the publishing firm and there made friends with William Morse.

When the Civil War began, Frank wrote in her diary: "It is true I am not American. . .not obliged to remain here during this terrible strife. . . .But it is not my desire to seek personal ease and comfort while so much sorrow and distress fill the land." With William Morse, Franklin Thompson joined the Flint Union Greys.

Frank failed her first physical; she was too short—5 feet 6 inches. The requirement was 5 feet 8 and one-quarter inches. Morse may have been influential the second time Frank applied, or the Union Greys may have desperately needed men. As one recruit said, they were accepting anyone who could "chew their durned salt horse and hardtack and carry a musket a few yards without falling down." When Frank finally signed up May 14, 1861, she wrote, "I thank God that I am permitted, in this hour of my adopted country's need, to express a tithe of the gratitude which I feel toward the people of the northern states." Her career in Company F, 2d Michigan Volunteer Infantry might have ended in basic training; her boots were so small, joking soldiers began calling their new comrade "our little woman." But Frank proved strong and healthy, prompt at roll call and reveille. She policed

*Sarah Emma Edmundson (Michigan State Archives)*

the camp, helped to build roads and fortifications, stood guard, and performed the various duties of a private; all under the successful guise of a male private.

Signing on as a field nurse, Frank continued this deception: she felt in male guise one "could better perform the necessary duties for sick and wounded men, and with less embarrassment to them and to..."herself. Working closely with a Chaplain May and his wife, Frank cared for the sick in the temporary hospitals of Washington. By spring the army moved out of Washington for the Peninsular Campaign. Outside of Yorktown, Virginia, besieging that city's Confederate garrison, Frank campaigned and became disillusioned with nursing.

One day returning from foraging, Frank found the camp deserted. She noticed a procession coming from the peach orchard; someone had just been buried. She was stunned to find out that Lieutenant James, her closest friend, had just been killed. Sitting in shock and disbelief, Frank heard Chaplain May describe the lieutenant's death. He had been delivering a message from headquarters to the picket line when a bullet passed through his temple, killing him instantly.

Frank and James had met in the Army. Both were from Canada, neither had any family (so Frank told James), both were travelers on their own, and both felt a deep sense of duty to the cause of the war. Unknown to James, he and Frank had met before the war. When the lieutenant spoke of his childhood friend, Sarah Edmonds, Frank became uneasy. It had been 5 years since they had last been together; 5 years since Sarah had assumed the identity of Franklin Thompson. Sarah had developed her disguise so well that even the lieutenant, a close and dear childhood friend, had no idea of her true identity.

But now James was gone. In his last hours she hadn't been at his side to comfort him and say a last goodbye. Unable to cry or sleep that night, Frank went to James' gravesite. "It was there, in that midnight hour, kneeling beside the grave of him who was very dear to me, that I vowed to avenge the death of that Christian hero....I could not forgive his murderers. I did not enjoy taking care of the sick and wounded as I once did."

When Frank told the chaplain and Mrs. May of her dissatisfaction with nursing, Chaplain May told her of a dangerous job with tremendous responsibility. A spy just captured in Richmond and

about to be executed had to be replaced. Disheartened with nursing, Frank saw this position as an excellent opportunity to avenge the late lieutenant's murder. After applying for this position, she was ordered to appear before Major General McClellan and Samuel Heintzelman, the corps commander. Her superiors questioned her views of the rebellion and why she wanted to become a spy. Next she took a firearms test, showing all the skill of a veteran. Another board of commanders was brought in to question her. Finally, she submitted to a 19th-century oddity; the bumps on her head were examined. She easily passed the phrenological test because her "organs of secretiveness and combativeness" were found to be largely developed. Franklin Thompson took an oath of allegiance and became a spy for the secret service of the United States Government.

Quickly developing her first disguise, Frank returned to camp as a male contraband. She approached Mrs. May and asked for a job. Mrs. May sent the youth on to a doctor who needed a cook. That night Ned prepared supper for the doctor, washed the dishes, and blackened the doctor's boots. Then she slipped out to Mrs. May's tent and, after finally convincing her that she was Frank, swore her to secrecy. Slipping into enemy territory, she lay trembling on bare ground through the night. At morning she entered the Yorktown fortifications, hauled gravel, and completed her first mission, writing a detailed description of the Yorktown fort and its cannon.

The next day, Ned exchanged jobs with a boy who carried water to soldiers. Not only was carrying water easier, it afforded Ned an opportunity to mingle with the soldiers. She saw General Robert E. Lee inspecting the fort, and learned there were about 150,000 rebels around the town. Remembering the laboring slaves, she returned to the fort with water for them and almost had her identity discovered. A worker eyed her curiously and exclaimed that 'he' was turning white! Luckily, no one took it seriously; they simply laughed and went back to work. As soon as she could Ned reapplied silver nitrate to her skin.

On the third day after carrying supper to the picket line, Ned had a gun shoved into her hands and was commanded to shoot anything or anybody coming from the enemy's line. She took full advantage of this liberty and slipped into the night. At dawn she gave the proper sign to the Federals at the picket line and turned her information and rifle over to headquarters.

Frank's second disguise for infiltration was that of an Irish peddler woman, complete with a basket of cakes and pies and an Irish brogue. After swimming across the Chickahominy, as "Bridget" she sent her horse back to the other side and was left alone in the swamp that night. Her food and clothing soaked, she wandered for 3 days in the malaria-infested swamp, suffering from chills, trying to find a way out. Finally she emerged by following the sound of cannon fire. Bridget made her way to a house where she found a dying rebel soldier inside, lying on a bed of straw.

The soldier had been ill with typhoid for weeks before the attack on Cold Harbor. After a skirmish with the Yankees, he had weakened and fallen behind, dragging himself to the house to avoid capture. Too weak to prepare any food, he told his new companion where to find some flour and corn meal. Famished, the spy quickly built a fire, made some hoe cakes and tea, and tenderly fed the soldier before she satisfied her own appetite. Though the soldier seemed to gain strength, they talked of his faith and prayed together. Before he died he asked Bridget to take his gold watch to Major McKee of General Ewell's staff and tell him of his peaceful death. Then he tried to put a ring on her finger, in return for her consolation in his last hours. He died cradled in her arms late that night. Bridget lay down and slept till dawn, awoke, cut a lock of the soldier's hair, took his watch and some letters from his pocket, and silently said goodbye to him again.

Before leaving the house she perfected her disguise with articles she had found in the house—mustard, pepper, an old pair of green glasses, and a bottle of red ink. She made a mustard plaster and placed it on the side of her face until it blistered, painted a red line around her eyes, rubbed dark yellow clay over her face, put on the green glasses, and pulled up the hood. Filling her basket with odds and ends from the house to replace her spoiled cakes, Bridget headed toward Richmond.

When she approached a picket guard, she took out her handkerchief filled with black pepper and dabbed her eyes, causing the tears to flow freely. The sympathetic guard let her pass without giving the sign. She went directly to headquarters and asked for Major McKee. That evening she related the death of Allen Hall, giving the major the gold watch and a package. Major McKee asked her to go with a detail of soldiers immediately to

recover the captain's body before McClellan's army crossed the Chickahominy. Bridget agreed. The detachment reached the house and the sergeant sent her up the road with instructions to return if she heard or saw any Yankees. Taking off in that direction, she quickly rode all the way to the Chickahominy and delivered her information as the troops were crossing the bridges.

Sarah's other disguises—a female contraband, a dry goods clerk, a young confederate boy—helped her to infiltrate Confederate lines 11 times between 1862 and 1863 without detection. Frank's prolonged absences were covered by special assignments: service as an orderly for Major General Philip Kearney at Fair Oaks and later as a mail carrier and postmaster of the brigade during the Peninsula Campaign. From September to October 1862 her whereabouts are not really known; the muster reports read that Franklin Thompson was "absent, mail carrier, on duty by order Col. Poe." Her presence at the Battle of Antietam has not been explained, but her story of helping a wounded soldier cannot be overlooked. "In passing among the wounded after they had been carried from the field, my attention was attracted to the pale, sweet face of a youthful soldier who was severly wounded in the neck. The wound still bled profusely, and the boy was growing faint from loss of blood. I stooped down and asked him if there was anything he would like to have done for him. The soldier turned a pair of beautiful, clear, intelligent eyes upon me for a moment in an earnest gaze, and then, as if satisfied with the scrutiny, said faintly: 'Yes, yes; there is something to be done, and that quickly, for I am dying.'

"Something in the tone and voice made me look more closely at the face of the speaker, and that look satisfied me that my suspicion was well founded.... The little trembling hand beckoned me closer, and I knelt down and bent my head until it touched the golden locks on the pale brow before me; I listened with breathless attention to catch every sound which fell from those dying lips. The substance of which was as follows:

'I can trust you, and will tell you a secret. I am not what I seem, but am a female. I enlisted from the purest motives, and have remained undiscovered and unsuspected. I have neither father, mother, nor sister. My only brother was killed today.' I closed his eyes about an hour before I was wounded. I shall soon be with him. I am a Christian, and have maintained the Christian character ever since I entered the army. I have performed the

duties of a soldier faithfully, and am willing to die for the cause of truth and freedom. My trust is in God, and I die in peace. I wish you to bury me with your own hands, that none may know after my death that I am other than my appearance indicates.... I know I can trust you—you will do as I have requested?'"

Frank buried the young woman under a mulberry tree somewhere on the Antietam battlefield.

After the Battle of Fredericksburg, the 2d Michigan moved from the III Corps to the IX Corps and was stationed in Kentucky in the spring of 1863 to take part in western campaigning. Frank had contracted malaria from the Chickahominy swamp and required hospitalization. But medical treatment would have uncovered her true sex and she "would rather have been shot dead than to have been known to be a woman and sent away from the Army under guard as a criminal." With a choice of desertion or discovery she chose the former. Franklin Thompson deserted April 22, 1863, in Lebanon, Kentucky.

While nursing herself back to health, Sarah put aside the disguise of Franklin Thompson and began writing her book, *Unsexed or the Female Soldier.* As she relived her adventures, Sarah "longed to go back and engage in the same duties once more." When she recovered, she worked with the Christian Commission at Harpers Ferry until the close of the war, nursing the wounded and distributing proceeds from her book (175,000 copies) to soldiers' aid societies.

In postwar years, Sarah returned to New Brunswick and began a relationship with Linus H. Seelye, a mechanic. In 1866, Linus followed her to Oberlin, Ohio, and married her April 27, 1867. They raised three children.

Years passed. A reunion was held for the 2d Michigan Infantry in 1883, but Sarah, bedridden, could not attend. She came to the reunion the following year, however, and shocked many of her comrades. After 20 years everyone had changed, but not to a different sex! Seeing Sarah in poor health and in need of medical care and financial support, the men encouraged her to apply

*Sarah Emma Edmundson disguished as a male*
*(Michigan State Archives)*

for a pension. Sarah's story unfolded before the 48th Congress in 1884. Ten letters of testimony were written by her comrades mentioning that Sarah's "manly bearing, soldierly qualities, kindness, and devotion to the sick deserve to be recognized in a liberal and substantial manner." Sarah was more concerned about the bill eradicating "desertion" from her record than the bill granting her a pension. For her faithful service the 48th Congress granted Sarah Emma Edmonds Seelye a $12 monthly pension. The 49th Congress removed "desertion" from Franklin Thompson's record and gave Sarah backpay and bounties.

She lived her remaining years in LaPorte, Texas, mustered into the George G. McClellan Post of the Grand Army of the Republic in Houston (the only woman member of that organization), and died at age 57 on September 5, 1898. As the only female buried in the Washington Cemetery in Houston, her plot is honored with full military honors. Sarah's epitaph reads: "EMMA E. SEELYE, ARMY NURSE."

# Uncommon Valor and COMSEC

*By Jack E. Ingram*

The story of Master Sergeant Roy P. Benavidez, U.S. Army, Retired, is widely known throughout the military services today. Benavidez has become a role model for NCO's and his motto of "Duty, Honor, Country" speaks to the hearts of everyone in Government service. Master Sergeant (then Staff Sergeant) Benavidez earned the Medal of Honor on May 2, 1968, near Loc Ninh, Vietnam. For those who may not be familiar with this heroic action, this is a brief summarization of that day's events.

Having been inserted by helicopter on the morning of May 2, 1968, a 12-man Special Forces Reconnaissance Team found itself surrounded by superior enemy forces. The team was on an important intelligence gathering mission. Back at the forward base, Sergeant Benavidez was off duty and entering the radio hut when an extraction request came in over the radio. Benavidez recognized the voice and knew the importance of the mission. He was determined to go in and get the men out—all of them! Jumping on the departing rescue chopper and arriving at the team's position a few minutes later, Benavidez jumped out and ran 75 meters under withering fire to reach the crippled team. He was wounded three times before reaching the men, and when he did get to them, he found the team leader dead and the remaining men either wounded or dead. For the next 8 hours, Sergeant Benavidez fought, set up defensive fire, administered first aid, and called in air strikes to help suppress enemy fire.

After Benavidez had already put several men on the rescue chopper, the pilot was killed causing it to crash. Sergeant Benavidez then pulled the men out of the burning chopper and waited for another to arrive. Continuing to drag and carry the dead and wounded men to the second chopper, Benavidez was attacked from behind and during hand-to-hand combat he received several serious wounds before killing his adversary. He then

killed two more Viet Cong approaching the chopper unseen by the door gunner. After all the men, dead and wounded, were inside the rescue chopper, Sergeant Benavidez allowed himself to be taken on board also.

**Now for the Communications Security (COMSEC) Story**

Sergeant Benavidez was keenly aware of the need for proper radio authentication procedures and what might happen to U.S. forces in the area should the team's authenticators fall into enemy hands. Benavidez knew the men kept the signal operating instructions (SOI) on themselves in a pocket or on a chain. He was afraid if he did not go in and get all the team members out, communications would be vulnerable to deception by Viet Cong radio operators using U.S. authentication tables and frequencies. He knew that a lack of authentication security could bring in "friendly fire," including air strikes, or cause misdirection of friendly forces by the enemy, resulting in heavy loss of life to U.S. forces.

During the 8 hours Sergeant Benavidez was on the ground, he succeeded in destroying or bringing out virtually all of the team's classified material and equipment. Not having time to search the dead for their SOI's, he threw them on board the chopper along with the living. When the first rescue chopper was shot down, he went into the burning aircraft and destroyed the radio. After getting the men on board the second rescue chopper, Benavidez went back again to make sure he had all of the men and that all classified materials had been secured or destroyed. Only then, in extremely serious condition from numerous wounds and loss of blood, did he allow himself to be pulled into the extraction aircraft.

Sergeant Benavidez wanted to save his fellow soldiers and ensure the continued security of the mission and U.S. communications in the area. Under the most trying of combat circumstances, Benavidez's innate devotion to "Duty, Honor, Country" caused him to rise to the occasion and perform the most incredible COMSEC story we have ever heard.

*Sergeant Roy P. Benavidez (Courtesy of Jack E. Ingram)*

AVIDEZ

# Signalman's Odyssey

*By Michael Maslak*

*In January 1946, 4 months out of a Japanese prison camp, Technical Sergeant Michael Maslak arrived at Arlington Hall Station, Arlington, Virginia—headquarters of the Second Signal Service Battalion. The battalion, along with its worldwide detachments, had played an instrumental role in helping to secure the Allies' victory over Japan. The young soldier brought with him a most amazing story of adventure.*

## An Introduction

I enlisted in the Civilian Conservation Corps in July 1938, the month following my graduation from high school at Johnson City, New York. On April 27, 1939, I joined the Army at Binghamton, New York, and was sent to the signal communications school at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, where I was trained principally in fixed-station operations. My experience in signal intelligence work dates back to November 20, 1939, when I was detailed just a few miles away to a detachment of the Second Signal Service Company (predecessor to the Second Signal Service Battalion) at Fort Hancock, New Jersey.

At the time of my transfer to Fort Hancock, I was not a member of the Second Signal Service Company. However, I was assigned to the company later, and in January 1940, was sent along with four others to another of the company's detachments; this time at Fort Hunt, Alexandria, Virginia.

I went overseas in June 1940 to Fort McKinley in the Philippines where I spent my next year as an intercept operator with Station 6, a detachment of the Second Signal Service Company. In August 1941, I became one of 60 students entering the West Point Preparatory School at Camp John Hay, Baguio, Luzon. I was a private first class at the time. Prior to my entrance into the school, I had completed several reserve officer extension courses and was on the second extension course in cryptography.

*Sgt. Michael Maslak in March 1946 (U.S. Army photo)*

When the war began (December 7, 1941), the school personnel were placed on duty with the other units of Camp John Hay Garrison which consisted of two companies of Philippine scouts, along with signal and quartermaster detachments of U.S. troops. There were approximately 50 Americans in camp.

A few days later, I was able to radio Lieutenant Colonel Sherr (commander of Station 6) to ask him if I should return. He replied that I should remain at Camp John Hay if I was needed, so I stayed until the evacuation. However, I was anxious to do intercept operating, and I was determined to make every effort to rejoin my own outfit when we started to move south toward Bataan.

Camp John Hay was not organized and equipped for a major defense, but no invasion in force had yet threatened the area. A thorough watch for enemy moves was being kept as the 228th Signal Operations Company continued to provide the necessary communications between observer outposts and the camp. This organization also maintained radio communication between General MacArthur's USAFFE (U.S. Army Forces in the Far East) Headquarters and Camp John Hay. I was placed on duty in Camp John Hay controlling the local net and working USAFFE. This served to relieve the burden on the station's three regular operators.

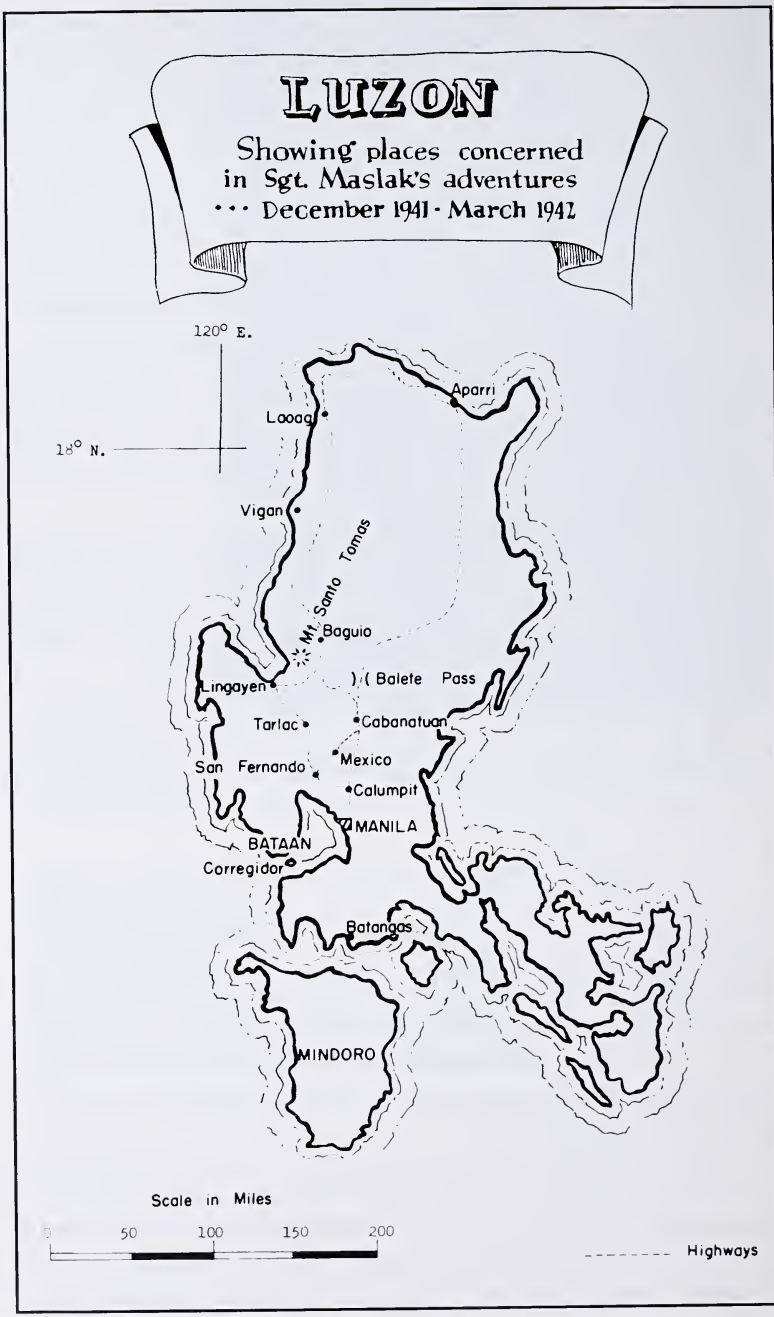
On December 24, after coming off a night watch, I was unable to sleep so I got permission to ride in a car which was going to the Philippine Scouts installation where my school roommate was on duty. En route, we suddenly saw, rounding a curve about a quarter of a mile ahead, the Japanese vanguard push we had been awaiting.

Our driver whirled around in the road and headed back toward camp. There was an exchange of fire between us and the enemy's leading vehicle. At the direction of an infantry lieutenant in our car, we dropped hand grenades in the road. We saw one of them blow up the Japanese lead truck, filled with troops.

We were the last to cross a large bridge on the road back to camp. The word was given that it should be blown up, and the destruction of this key crossing (the highway was the only one into Baguio from that direction) slowed up the enemy advance perhaps 2 or 3 days.

The evacuation of Baguio was ordered that evening. The garrison was split up into three groups, two of which had the objective of joining the main United States and Philippine forces on Bataan, approximately 160 miles away. I was a member of the first group to leave. It included 11 of the 13 remaining West Point school students, plus several officers and Filipinos. We left at 7 o'clock that night, and the next group started 4 hours later. The third group, which included only a few Americans, took to the hills to become guerrillas.

General MacArthur had ordered personnel from Camp John Hay to rendezvous with a group of vehicles from Bataan near Balete Pass. Traveling on foot, we made the journey in 3 nights and 2 days, arriving on December 27. We met two buses about 10 miles north of the pass. This was a gathering place for many


LUZON
Showing places concerned
in Sgt. Maslak's adventures
··· December 1941 - March 1942
120° E.
18° N.
Aparri
Looag
Vigan
Mt. Santo Tomas
Baguio
Lingayen
Balete Pass
Tarlac
Cabanatuan
Mexico
San Fernando
Calumpit
MANILA
BATAAN
Corregidor
Batangas
MINDORO
Scale in Miles
0
50
100
150
200
Highways

of the scattered American and Filipino forces in the northern part of the island.

At a point near Balete Pass we saw Japanese troops about a half of a mile away moving in artillery as we passed. They did not appear to see us or to realize that a sizable group of Americans might be in the vicinity.

We rode through Balete Pass to Mexico, a village north of Manila which was another gathering point for groups of evacuees. Here I tried tapping into the commercial telephone lines using a field phone in an attempt to get through to Bataan or Corregidor to locate the Second Signal Service Company detachment. The wires were dead as Manila was being evacuated that day and the call had to go through there.

While at Mexico, my schoolmates and I were placed on duty with Philippine army units. Each one us was assigned to a different platoon for the benefit of the Filipinos' morale more than anything else. I was sent to an engineer outfit whose job was to carry out demolitions. This job lasted about 3 days, or until December 30, by which time the Lingayen Gulf invasion had penetrated to a point only a few miles away. We were being covered by a scattering of U.S. units which were opposing the Japanese forces pushing in from the Lingayen Gulf. After the rear guard troops had crossed the bridges on their withdrawal to Bataan, each bridge was blown up.

On New Year's Eve, we were taken to Bataan in trucks. I was with the Americans with whom I had come down from Baguio. We had reassembled upon hearing that the retreat into the Bataan pennisula was to start.

### Next Stop—Corregidor

After spending 2 days on Bataan, I went across the channel by barge to Corregidor to find Detachment 6 of the Second Signal Service Company, having decided that they must be there. I got onto "The Rock" just in time to get in on an air raid by the enemy. The bombing that day would actually be the closest call of all the

*Luzon Map—showing places concerned in Sgt. Maslak's adventures December 1941 - March 1942 (U.S. Army photo)*

air raids I had experienced there, as well as my later adventures which covered nearly 4 years. After one direct hit, I was only about 15 feet from the edge of a huge crater when I "woke up."

Upon regaining my bearings, I resumed asking questions regarding the whereabouts of Detachment 6 and soon got a good clue—someone had seen two pieces of direction-finding equipment being used topside on "The Rock" that morning. Running this down led me to Lieutenant Brown (operations officer) and the rest of the boys of Detachment 6. They were inside "The Rock" operating, and though an outward evidence of radio intelligence (RI) activity had enabled me to find them, they were actually engaged in no RI mission. They were organizing communications nets with the units that were withdrawing into Bataan and digging in there.

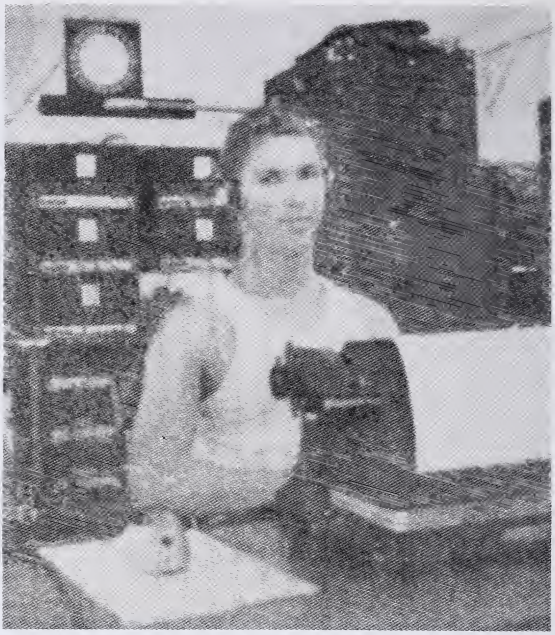
Radio intelligence work was resumed sometime between January 15 and 20. Four of the 18 detachment members—Lieutenants Brown, Gelb, Kinkade (all three former intercept operators of Detachment 6 who had received direct commissions either just before or upon the outbreak of war), and myself—were the first to be taken off the communications job, as we were able to copy the katakana (a Japanese phonetic syllabary) telegraph code transmissions better than any of the others. Later on, as more men could be spared from communications operations, First Sergeant Messer (Chief Operator), Private First Class Gill (Intercept Operator), and Private First Class Kapp (Intercept Operator) were added to the intercept group; Private First Class Bradbury (Clerk) was assigned to clerical work helping us.

### The Intercept Mission

The first radio intelligence job was the intercept of three types of communications: transmissions from and to the Japanese reconnaissance planes which were frequently observed; traffic of the air-ferrying commands in the Philippines area; and reports from Japanese weather stations scattered about the islands. Because the traffic that was intercepted largely concerned the Air Corps and air defense, we were located at the antiaircraft command post in the main tunnel. An antiaircraft telephone operator was stationed with us to relay information from us to the executive officer of the regiment, and in turn, to the commanding officer.

*2d Signal Service Company, Ft McKinley Detachment, September 1940 Standing (left to right)—Pfc. Michael Maslak, Pfc. Daniel Trucz, Pfc. Joseph Sarata, Pfc. Daniel Gelb, Pfc. Berkley Kinkade, Pfc. William Stage, Cpl. James Rhen. Seated (left to right)—Sgt. Eustace Messer, SSgt. William McCullough, Maj. Joe Sherr, MSgt. Braxton Small, Cpl. Wayne Hightower (U.S. Army photo)*

Our setup was makeshift, of course. Our antennas were outside and reached the receivers via a very long lead-in. For receivers, we had two Super-Pros—all we could ask for in the way of reception and as many as the initial four of us could man. All of us did intercept, but Lieutenant Brown and Lieutenant Gelb also had to evaluate the traffic and make translations (there was much plain-text), coordinate our results with G-2, and perform liaison. Lieutenant Colonel Sherr visited us daily and was almost always able to contribute valuable suggestions. All messages pertaining to the Philippines he took to USAFFE Headquarters. We were also in direct telephone contact with the Navy, which had



*PFC Maslak in March 1941 (U.S. Army photo)*

an RI setup in the Navy tunnel near Monkey Point. A naval officer helped us a great deal in plain-text translations.

Eight men were the most we ever had on intercept work at one time. Because the officers were largely absorbed in analytic work and the other enlisted men were new at copying katakana, a very large part of the intercept work fell to me, especially during February when Lieutenant Kinkade took three of the enlisted men with him to do RI work at the front lines on Bataan. To relieve me, one of the officers would take over the receivers during my meals; I also took a break now and then to look over the traffic and work on some of the notes I had taken while operating.

## Air Raid Tip-offs

Because of the way the Japanese air raids and reconnaissance missions were carried out and so much of the enemy traffic was in plain-text or was subject to analysis, we were able to develop considerable information for G-2.

Early in February, a large number of Japanese had landed at Agaloma, at the end of the Bataan Peninsula. Their mission was infiltrating and sniping. The radio traffic of the planes which were sent to keep them supplied with food and other necessities disclosed to us what was afoot. Our forces headed them off and the enemy's mission was a failure.

When the Japanese landed on Mindoro in late February or early March, we intercept operators were the first ones to know. United States troops on the opposite side of the island from the landing were informed of what had taken place and were given instructions to evacuate. We also were the source of the first information of the enemies landing at Batangas on Luzon.

One of our most interesting radio intelligence battles involved Captain Villamoor, a Philippine air ace who made regular reconnaissance flights over the Japanese batteries across from Bataan. One day Foto Joe (as all Japanese reconnaissance aircraft were called) whose plane we were accustomed to seeing at 7 o'clock every morning, spotted Captain Villamoor and reported his position to the Japanese base. We heard the Japanese send up six Zeros after our man. We then told the Air Corps who informed the five P-40's already in the air as protection for Captain Villamoor that the Zeros were coming. Our boys got all the Zeros while losing only one of their own. Meanwhile, Foto Joe had requested permission from his base to land, reporting the outcome of the dogfight at the same time. We heard the base tell him more Zeros were coming up. So our planes, low on gasoline by that time, were called in.

## Voice Intercept

Later in March, the Japanese bombers started using radiotelephone. We obtained two interpreters, a Filipino and a Japanese-American (whose own exciting adventure is told in the companion story, "Undercover Nisei") to read the enemy's voice

transmissions for us. The Nisei, despite his being highly trusted, could go about only under the guard of an American officer, lest he be mistaken for an enemy.

We knew the transmitting frequencies of almost all the air bases from which planes came over. The type of traffic they sent was always the tipoff of an impending raid. Special frequencies were used for bombing; they alone were an invaluable source of intelligence for us. We came to know planes' callsigns by heart as well as the pilots' nicknames or codenames; they would use names of fruits. Not only were the Japanese generous with their information as to their intentions, but they also kept us well informed of their results. They would report their losses and casualties, bombing or observation outcome, and what U.S. batteries got the planes that were shot down, etc. They would then attempt to knock out the U.S. batteries responsible for inflicting the damage.

After the Air Corps came to respect the results of radio intelligence, four Air Corps sergeants were sent to us to learn intercept operating. We gave them as much training as we could.

### The Australia Contingent

We were doing better work all the time, but it was decided that Lieutenant Brown and 10 enlisted men, myself included, be sent to Australia to be the nucleus for radio intelligence work there. The other intercept operators selected included Tech Sergeant Messer, Sergeant Card, Sergeant Phelan, Corporal Nurss, Corporal Rhen, Corporal Stein, Private First Class Kapp, and Private First Class Gill. Private First Class Bradbury, the clerk, was also scheduled to evacuate. Those of Station 6 not included in this group were Lieutenants Gelb and Kinkade and three Air Corps sergeants assigned to the detachment: Summons, Sarata, and Hall. These five would be the only ones left on Corregidor to do RI work. Sergeant Hightower, also a member of the Second Signal Service Company, was transferred to a supply outfit, and Lieutenant Colonel Sherr, Detachment 6 commander, was selected as one of the officers to accompany General Douglas MacArthur's party to Australia.

On March 27, Lieutenant Brown along with Bradbury, Messer, Kapp, and myself (the first members of the designated 11 to leave)

shook hands with the men who were staying behind at Corregidor. We regretted very much leaving some of our men behind, but in the case of Lieutenant Gelb our feelings were doubly strong because of his extraordinary ability in radio intelligence work. He was the best intercept man I have ever seen, and he knew the traffic so well that he was also very valuable as an analyst. He and Lieutenant Kinkade had been directly commissioned right after the war started. If they had not been officers they probably would have been included in the group evacuated, but the orders for our move to Australia simply provided for one officer and 10 enlisted men.

After saying our farewells, we boarded a launch which carried us over to Bataan Field, one of two airstrips on Bataan. We arrived at about 9 o'clock in the evening, and in time for supper. A large can of fish was made into stew for the 200 men at the airstrip. We slept under a shack until next morning when we were called to board a light, unarmed "Waco" plane. Before climbing in, we gave some of our cigarettes to Bataan soldiers who were very grateful, not having had a real smoke for many days. It was only 10 days before Bataan fell, and they were lean and despair.

During the dawn hours, we were flown to Cebu, and at dusk, we went on to Mindanao (the large southern island in the Philippine chain) which was as far as a land plane from Bataan could go. Our destination in Mindanao was Del Monte Field in the north-central part of the island. Our group of five were the first to arrive, and by April 1, the entire group of 11 had assembled.

We arrived at Del Monte expecting to get air transportation to Australia almost immediately. We understood that our evacuation to Australia was a matter of the utmost urgency; and we thought that getting transportation, although we knew there was enough of it to evacuate only a very small part of those on Corregidor and Bataan, would be little more than a formality in our case. Our orders read that the men named would "proceed to Mindanao, and Quartermaster will provide transportation for Mission 'A'." The "A" referred to persons selected for their specialties to go to Australia.

We ran into trouble immediately. There were a lot of high ranking officers, including pilots, who were also supposed to get to Australia. Despite the weight which our orders seemed to carry, the competition for plane seats was going to be stiff.

MINDANAO
and nearby islands ..
Showing
places mentioned
in Sgt. Maslak's
adventures
March to July '42
N
FLIGHT
FROM BATAAN
MAR. 27
Cebu
126° E
10° N
Surigao
Butuan
Cagayan
Iligan
Del Monte
Malaybalay
Valencia
LAKE
LANAO
SET SAIL
ON
JUNE
10
Bislig
Malabang
Cotabato
Davao
Zamboanga
SCALE OF MILES
0
50
100
150
ROADS

While we waited there was still plenty to do. Four days after arriving from Corregidor, we were able to obtain three high-frequency "ham" receivers from the Air Corps. We then set them up in a small tunnel at the air field, stringing antennas outside. The makeshift antennas were fabricated from wiring retrieved from two shotdown American planes.

The experience we had acquired back at "The Rock" enabled us to copy as much traffic as we could hear with those receivers. The same frequencies were in use, and we found Foto Joe, the Japanese reconnaissance pilot, and his buddies with us again before very long. In the latter part of the month, the move of the reconnaissance squadron we had come to know up north indicated that the Japanese push would be transferred from Luzon to Mindanao; this would occur just as we predicted.

### The Battle for Airplane Seats

No planes came until April 13, when three B-17's and ten B-25's arrived from Australia. They brought cigarettes, candy, and medical supplies intended for the boys on Bataan. They did not know that Bataan was lost, an event which had left us all crestfallen when we realized that the men there could no longer be helped. As a sort of retaliation, however, these planes loaded up with bombs and played havoc with Japanese shipping at Subic Bay, Cebu, and other points.

All of the planes were to take passengers back to Australia, but one of the B-17's burned on the ground in a dive-bombing attack, and its crew took up all the space in the second plane. The third B-17 was the first of the 12 planes to start back. It took off early one morning a few days later. Although Lieutenant Brown was unable to get any of the enlisted men onto that flight, a seat was allotted to him. He was far outranked by the other passengers, but it was important that, as key man in our intercept and traffic analysis work, he receive the highest priority for transportation of the 11 men in our group.

*Mindanao Map—showing places mentioned in Sgt. Maslak's adventures March to July 1942 (U.S. Army photo)*

Messer was the ranking enlisted man and was left in charge. Four places were allotted to the group on the B-25's which were to leave that night. These seats went to Sergeants Messer, Card, and Phelan and Corporal Nurss. Of these four, only Messer had been doing intercept work on Corregidor, and he was not as experienced as some of us who remained.

The six of us who were left continued to contact the Air Corps colonel in command of the field. He always told us we had top priority of all the people at the field—perhaps 50 pilots and other officers. In the meantime, we continued our radio intelligence work. The enemy's pilots used plain language and reported their positions each time. Although we were able to predict their strikes and locate their bases along with ground forces, there was no anti-aircraft or air support remaining to do anything about it.

When the next plane came on 22 April, the Air Corps colonel who remained in charge told us that a new list of passengers had arrived from Australia and that we were not on it. Another plane came a week later, and we were given the same explanation for not receiving seats on it. That was the last plane to leave Del Monte. Its departure, as I recall, was about 11 o'clock on the night of the 29th.

### Australia Again Asks for Us

Early the next day, urgent radio orders signed by General MacArthur arrived from Australia via Corregidor, giving our names, ranks, and serial numbers; and saying we were to proceed to Lake Lanao, where six seats would be available for us on a PBY. The message confirmed that we remain on Mission "A" status. Our departure from Del Monte marked the end of our radio intelligence work in the Philippines. Lake Lanao, located somewhat west of the center of the island, was a day's travel, but we did not get there until the evening of the 30th due to mechanical problems experienced by the truck in which we were traveling. The two PBY aircraft which had come from Australia via Corregidor were anchored off an island in the lake. When we reached the shore, we found the officer who was serving as dispatcher for the flights about to start. We gave him our orders, and he looked at them and at us in our bedraggled condition and told us that we would not be going.

Corporal Stein, the highest ranking among us, argued with the officer but without success.

The two aircraft took off, but one of them was forced down immediately on account of being too heavily loaded. It struck a reef, and the hull sprang a leak. Japanese soldiers were not far away, and it appeared that the passengers on the disabled plane might be taken prisoner if they remained there awaiting repairs, so they, along with the rest of us, were taken back to Del Monte by bus. (We later heard that when the repaired plane finally lifted off for Australia, the Japanese were firing at it.)

On April 27, the Japanese landed in large numbers on the island of Mindanao, forcing the Americans to move their evacuation takeoff point to Valencia. On May 2, we started for Valencia, located approximately at the center of the island. This was the site of the last U.S.-held air base on Mindanao. However, the one-time secret base was soon no longer a secret as it too became the target of the enemy's bombs. Here, we were put to work doing guard duty, digging foxholes, and repairing telephone lines while the Japanese were dive-bombing and strafing the Valencia field. The Japanese air attacked our ammunition dumps and burned up the three small planes which remained. Messages were still being sent to Australia requesting that planes be sent to evacuate us. Each night we would wait at the field with the others, hoping a plane would come from Australia. But none ever did.

### Still Looking for Transportation

On the 8th of May, we heard the rumor that Corregidor had surrendered and that the island of Mindanao on which we were then located would soon follow. The six of us who remained from Detachment 6 went to Major Rotterham, our immediate supervisor, and told him we wanted to take off rather than become prisoners. He gave each of us a pistol, and we left, hiking northward. By evening we reached the edge of the mountains, as far as a truck could go. It was here that we heard from the natives, some of whom knew enough English to talk to us, that the news of surrender had been false. In addition, Private First Class Bradbury had contracted foot problems from the hiking. As a result of these developments, we decided to go back. We slept

that night in a shack near the trail. En route the next day, we met a truck which had been sent to look for us. The search party confirmed that the report of a surrender had indeed been wrong.

By the afternoon we were back at Valencia. There was still hope that a plane would come; in fact, one was expected. As the only enlisted men to be evacuated, we were put in a kitchen under guard for our own protection; all the while we continued to carry weapons ourselves. At about 11 o'clock that night, word was received that no plane could come. We did not know the reason, but bad weather was the probable cause for cancellation. (Unknown to the remaining six members of the Second Signal Service Company, Lieutenant Brown had urgently begged MacArthur's Chief of Staff, Colonel Richard Sutherland, to retrieve them. A plane was sent out and returned, but without the intercept operators as passengers.)

When the news came that there would be no plane, Major Rotterham, knowing our ideas of escaping, told us we were still free to do whatever we wanted as to staying there or taking off. However, we remained at Valencia that night to await further information regarding the rumored surrender, intending all the while to take off again if it should be announced. In the morning, we heard that the formal surrender would be the next day, the 11th of May, at 10 o'clock in the morning.

Corporal Rhen and Private First Class Gill left immediately. I was anxious to go but wanted the other three to come along. However, Kapp, Stein, and Bradbury were at that time still undecided. The next morning, everyone at the field attended a meeting to receive instructions for assembling and going to Malaybalay where all Americans in the area were to give themselves up. The speaker at this meeting, a captain, warned those who were talking of taking to the hills, mentioning the threat of malaria and likelihood of starving or being turned over to the Japanese by the natives. He also said that if taken prisoner as guerrillas, we would be shot.

Kapp, Stein, and myself all tried to persuade Bradbury to come along, but he would not on account of his bad feet. After finally deciding that Bradbury could not be persuaded, we went to Major Rotterham who also advised us as the speaker had but told us to go ahead if we were sure we wanted to. He gave us pistols, half a dozen cans of sardines, and 10 pounds of rice.

We started out at 7 o'clock in the evening. Rhen and Gill had said that they would wait for us at the last village we had reached on our first start, or at the village just beyond that. They were gone from both, and natives told us they had pushed on ahead. We knew that the two of them would try to make the northeast coast. But we did not get any trace of them until nearly 3 weeks later. Our first trace of them was when natives told us they had seen a "big fellow" and a "little fellow" walking together along a stream that converged with the one we were following.

On the way to the coast, Kapp, Stein, and I met several other small American groups. (One of them was a group of Air Corps men with two caribous which were loaded down with enough provisions to last out the war.) Soon the three of us became five when we took up with Captain George Lindahl, a field artillery officer, and Sergeant J.D. Biss of the Air Corps.

Clambering up cliffs, hugging the narrow base of a canyon where it was light for only 6 hours a day, for over 2 weeks we followed the winding course of an ever-swelling river. Our supplies were fast becoming depleted, and we were beginning to experience that empty sensation in the stomach. We lived on nonpoisonous herbs we were able to find, even killing monkeys and kalau birds. We were having rain every day and the streams were becoming almost impossible to ford. One day we succeeded in making only three-quarters of a mile headway because the jungle was so heavy.

## Picking Up Speed

Things began to look up for us one day when we met a Filipino constabulary sergeant—a sort of backwoods policeman. He was traveling with three other natives and they had 5 pounds of rice. We had been on the way for 2 weeks and were out of food completely. He knew what was safe eating in the jungle, and our menu expanded miraculously.

We had fruitlessly tried to build a raft several times, so that we could take advantage of the waterways. With the Filipino sergeant's help we were able to make three small but good ones of bamboo, and from then on we covered the territory in a hurry. He left us when we came to the village where his wife was

staying. On learning his child was down with malaria, we gave him most of our quinine tablets.

It was at this village that we finally met up with Rhen. Our group had fared better than both Rhen and Gill. Rhen was completely exhausted, his feet swollen and sore. Gill was away on a foraging hunt so we did not get to see him at all. We lingered long enough to tell of our plans to reach Australia by boat. Before departing, we told Rhen that we would wait on the east coast of Mindanao at the village of Bislig for 6 days, hoping that both of them, sufficiently rested, would be able to catch up with us.

However, things did not turn out as we expected. The five of us waited at Bislig for 7 days, but Rhen and Gill failed to show up. We were getting extremely nervous, as the chance of our getting picked up by the Japanese were increasing every day. Ships were going up and down the coast all the time, and we reasoned that before long one of them was going to land, as there was a very good anchorage there. The Japanese were only a few miles to the west of us, and to make matters worse, a few of the natives appeared to be anything but trustworthy.

Back at Corregidor, Kapp had been only doing communications, working regular shifts, and fortunately for us, having plenty of time for poker. He was carrying about $300, though he hadn't been paid for 6 months. I had $50 or $60, and the others had varying amounts, all of us dwarfed by Kapp's bankroll. We spent every cent we had except 10 pesos buying a small boat and provisioning it for the voyage. The natives were glad enough to do business with us, and with that kind of money offered them it was no wonder.

### The Buckwheat

Our boat was a sailing banca of the type used to transport a load of about 60 bags of rice between neighboring coastal towns. The "Buckwheat" which got its name from the efforts of the Filipinos to pronounce the word "evacuate," now seems too ridiculous to describe. You had to be "half-tetched" or superbly determined to ship out on the high seas in a thing like that.

The hull was a dugout canoe some 30 or 35 feet long, and planked on the sides to give it depth. If one of us were standing on the bottom, he would be able to touch the gunwales about

waist high. If he reached out both arms, he could swing as if on parallel bars, probably 4 or 5 feet wide. Having no keel, the "Buckwheat" was kept upright by two heavy balance-poles suspended from the outriggers. A bamboo catwalk 3 feet wide stretched to the fore-tips of each pole. Fresh rattan rigging served as guylines for the wooden mast which was about 15 feet high. We braided our own lines from newly harvested hemp. The jib was a triangular section made of cotton material, and the main sail was quadrilateral in shape, also made from cotton, but a little heavier. Two small pulleys worked the lines for raising and lowering the bamboo boom and the mainsail. A guide line for playing the sail was attached to one end of the lower boom and freely held on a peg at the stern. The rudder, 4 feet long and 2 feet wide, had a tiller handle operated by the helmsman.

The hull was open except for the loose board "deck" forward of the mast, and a small planked area about 7 feet to the stern. The only raised part of the board was an 8-foot section with a "benig" mat over bamboo strips for flooring and the roof. The cabin housed our perishable goods and also doubled as a shelter; four could huddle inside when necessary. The coconuts and bananas were squeezed in with the firewood. Tea, salt, and a few limes completed our larder. A small bottle of gin which we radiomen had quietly taken charge of, for medicinal purposes, was being saved for chilly occasions.

### Flight from Mindanao

On the night of June 9, we were visited by three young Filipinos who had heard of our trip and wanted to accompany us. Max, Sperry, and Trench were their nicknames. They explained their reasons as a desire for revenge for suffering at the hands of the Japanese, for the death of a brother in the Philippine army, and a wish to carry on the war with the American Forces. Our knowledge of handling a banca was nil, and since they claimed to know how, we took them on. (The second night out, however, they nearly caused a catastrophe when we almost capsized. From then on, we relegated them to tasks calling for less judgement.) Late on the afternoon of June 10, 1942, we decided to weigh anchor. With our Filipino friends watching, we gave a prayer, raised sail, weighed the 10-pound anchor, and

embarked on our journey—destination Darwin, Australia—some 1,700 or 1,800 miles away, but it looked like a lot more than that to us. God alone knew where we would end, or when.

### At Sea

That first night out, with a favorable running tide and excellent sailing weather, we made good headway under an offshore breeze. During the first 4 days, everything was in our favor, even to the complete absence of Japanese vessels plying the waters between Surigao and Davao. It was the Japanese patrols which we feared most.

Before we were aware of it we were sailing through the Nenoesa Islands, a Dutch group southeast of Mindanao. We didn't stop—just surmised the identity of these specks of land from the National Geographic Magazine of the Far East which we were using as one of the navigational aids; the other two being the celestial bodies and a 25-cent compass which gave a reading if shaken hard enough. Heading a bit southeast we figured that in the 4 days the port stern breeze had favored us with 250 miles. At this rate we'd be in Australia in no time. But fate enjoyed her tricks with us, and we saw no more land for 23 days.

We were nearing the area of the doldrums when a 3-day calm beset us. The creaking booms and flapping sails reminded me of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.* Rather than drift aimlessly like a painted ship upon a painted ocean, we decided to ply our set oars and paddles in the hope of trying to maintain a pace of 25 miles a day.

A hot sun beat down on old "Buckwheat." Stein got sunstroke and needed care for a week in the cabin. The watches were lengthened. If Kapp was at the tiller, Lindahl and I would be pulling the long, heavy oars through rope locks on the forward deck, Biss and Trench would be making line from hemp and repairing the sheet, while Sperry and Max would be out on the catwalk sculling with paddles. We might have been satisfied with only a mile an hour if we had known what was in store for us.

For the next 20 days, such weather as terrible as any seafaring man could boast of hit us. Squalls, storms, and high winds buffeted us incessantly. Mountainous waves lifted us, then, as we hovered on the crest, plunged us to the trough to begin

the next cycle. The boat shipped water, and each hour of the day saw the bilge can in operation.

For the rest of our trip, there was rain each day, sometimes for a few hours, sometimes all day. There was no shelter for us except the space under our remaining half-shelter stretched from side to side, amidship. Kapp, with an ailing back and kidney, joined Stein in the "cabin." To Lindahl, Bliss, and me this loss of another man meant extra hours on watch—three and a half, to be exact. The man at the tiller must sit on a hard board behind the burlap-covered box which housed the compass and tiny lantern; he must shiver in a huddle position with only a soaked GI blanket for warmth and no one to talk to. It seems as though the end of each watch would never come, nor daylight be born again. Since it was almost always too cloudy to see the Southern Cross, and as the Northern Star was visible only part of the evening, the sight of the Morning Star, Venus, was a welcome one.

In the daylight, with the soaked and ripped sails hauled down, we had to play the boat around and actually head north rather than south; in order to keep us on an even keel and save the outriggers from the malicious pounding of the waves.

When the sky was clear and the sails were in good repair, we could tack, close-hauled, into the stiff south wind despite the waves; during a storm with the sails torn and the boom broken, we had to hold on and just ride it out. Once, the broadside waves split an outrigger beam, and if we hadn't tied it with a long piece of carbonera rope salvaged from a drifting Dayak fishing canoe, we would have been goners.

A sudden gust of wind twice caught us unaware, lifted one outrigger balance-pole clean off the water and soon had us turned turtle. Immediately, four of us dove along the catwalk, threw our hanging weights onto the poles and just in time managed to bring the boat on keel. The one sand bag we'd brought for ballast apparently wasn't enough.

In the dry weather we slept on top of the deck, on the catwalks, and on top of the cabin, but only snatches of rest could be had when it started to rain continuously. Our limbs soon became cramped as we huddled along the windward side of the boat. That was when the gin came in handy—shades of a barroom lassie—one bottle was a mighty slim amount!

## Menu de Luxe

An empty 5-gallon tin can with a sand bottom served as our stove. Usually several precious matches were wasted before we could get a fire going out of the firewood which had been split by a Filipino bolo knife. Breakfast consisted of steamed porridge and milk and sans sugar; the evening meal, of steamed rice or mungo beans, some corned beef or fish, and tea. Coconuts became our afternoon snacks. Water was rationed a canteenfull a day.

Max would add a fish or two to our diet now and then, by diving from the edge of the catwalk, slashing his prey in two, and retrieving the halves at the stern crossbeam. One lucky day, I was able to make a miraculous addition to our larder. Having tossed a feathered hook and line into a school of fish, I joined the fish story tellers' club when I caught eight tunas about 6 pounds each, in less than 2 minutes.

Twice, schools of whales passed near us. An enormous waterspout appeared one day a quarter of a mile away. It was heading straight toward us, when, much to our relief, it suddenly changed directions and spiraled off. Twenty-foot sharks provided us with frightening anxiety. (I estimated them at 25 feet for they stretched from the catwalk back to the rudder.) These sharks would follow the tuna which in turn were following smaller fish that were following us. Often, when a shark lunged for a tuna, he smacked his huge tailfins against the stern planks, threatening to spring leaks. The helmsman could have reached down and touched these monsters if he had been foolish enough to want to. We could stop their antics by shooting a couple, for the others would then lay back at the scent of blood, making short work of the wounded ones. Flying fish frequently sailed alongside and in front of us, but we never bothered each other.

When the boat was making no headway under battened down sails, we often talked and joked especially about our experiences during the long journey across Mindanao. It now seemed far away but we still remembered. The mountain ranges had seemed insurmountable, but we had passed them safely. We thought of the rivers we had to cross and the Cagayan swamps and knew that we had made it; and though things still looked pretty rugged, we said, "We'll get through this too."

Lindahl was the man who kept our hopes high; every time the rest of us fell into despair, he gave forth with a resounding pep talk. After his enlightening sessions on how the infallible strategy and the fighting heart of the Americans would turn back the enemy on all sides, we could not help but feel there was life and hope for us. We'd soon rejoin our own forces.

From my glance at his prewar photo in his personal sack, I would say Captain Lindahl—he was always "George" to us in the boat—with his dark mustache, was quite a handsome fellow. At 29, dark hair, straight nose and well-formed chin, he reminded me a little of Robert Taylor. He had plenty of that gift of gab. He learned part of that while getting an M.A. in economics at Stanford, but the rest must have been picked up as a West Coast sales representative for Proctor and Gamble. His black goatee is what got me, however; he never ceased stroking it!

J.D. Biss was exactly the opposite in demeanor and disposition. Where George was self-confident and alert to new problems, Biss, the Air Corps sergeant, was usually calm, quiet, and indifferent. He belonged to a New York family who had come over from the Carpatho-Ukraine. He had a round nose and a fat face which seemed even fatter when he smiled. Although somewhat large-boned, he was very adept with his hands. As our sailmaker and rigger, Biss patched the sheets and repaired and made line; we made use of his handy tricks on numerous occasions. Voluminous curls of sandy locks spilled down towards the nape of his neck, and he was the first of us to wind the ends of his long, strange whiskers into spirals—a la Jerry Colonna. His glistening grin and ruddy face with that smooth flowing blond beard gave him quite a dashing appearance.

On the other hand, Stein, a lanky Jewish boy from Passaic, New Jersey, gave still a different impression. He was kept in low spirits by his bad ankle which was fast becoming gangrenous. The lack of fresh food lowered our resistance to infection, and Stein obviously suffered far more than the rest of us in this respect. He reminded me of some Biblical character in tattered clothes, his long, dark hair, and jet-black whiskers streaming, bravely tugging at a wet sail line.

If there was anything of the authentic Robinson Crusoe about this crew, Kapp was it. I often watched his husky form strutting up and down the limits of our space, waving his hands as he

spoke. He was of Polish lineage by way of Brooklyn, as we could tell by his speech, but we couldn't understand his beard; it varied in shade from light brown, the color of his hair, to flaming red. Sometimes he was merry; sometimes, despondent. But most of the time, he was just good old Stan. Nevertheless, I counted on him for I knew he would be the last man among us to develop any semblance of a yellow streak.

We were all in the same boat, and it was a lot more than figure of speech. We operated that way—we Americans, that is. The Filipinos could scarcely converse with us, and although they were sharing our adventure, we made the decisions. Among us five soldiers, there was no such thing as rank. We agreed early in the voyage that we should all have an equal voice in any decisions which had to be made, and there were plenty of them. We were frequently not all at agreement, but dissenters very willingly went along with the majority's will. We were determined to avoid trouble among ourselves at all costs. In this we were completely successful.

### No Land in Sight

We were only 3 weeks out, but our physical health as a group wasn't the best. Stein was on his feet, but still groggy. Kapp, feeling worse, had only a dozen quinine tablets, and of what use were they in an open sea. Each of us was still sporting body sores from our Mindanao leech friends. The salt-stinging sores leaked and grew in area. I can't believe we actually had scurvy, but we did have bleeding gums, cracked lips, and dry sores in the mouth. Every scratch or break in the skin soon became infected. Then when our soaked suntan clothing clung stickly to our backs and legs, the sores started spreading. Our eyes were slightly inflamed, probably due to both the lack of vitamins and the constant glare of the sun. Even our buttocks had sores from sitting on the hard wet planks. Nonetheless, there was one part of our aching and tired bodies that wasn't ailing—the soles of our feet; they were calloused and as hard as leather.

We were glad our shoes had worn out hiking through Mindanao. Thumps on spikes or rubbing on bamboo and rattan edge now didn't bother our feet at all. We would stretch our feet and legs on the catwalk, and compare them, humorously, as to who had the toughest pair of soles.

As far as clothing goes, each of us had a suntan shirt and trousers. I owned an extra tattered and short-sleeved khaki shirt, besides my old orange-trimmed Signal Corps cap. Lindahl had a raincoat but the rainproofing had worn off of it. We each had a billfold or pocketbook holding a few souvenirs, Filipino coins, snapshots of stateside girl friends, a family picture, and the remaining 13 pesos of Kapp's winnings from the Corregidor poker marathon. Stein still sported his highschool ring. Biss contributed to our navigation equipment with a patched-up wrist watch which ran long enough, intermittently, to tell us when the tricks ended. Except for my .45 automatic, my most precious possession was a GI blanket which I had kept with me for almost three and one-half years.

In Mindanao, and on the sea, our most priceless weapon and tool was the bolo. Smaller and lighter than a machete, our bolo was fabricated from automobile springs. We used it in cutting through the interminable jungle growth, and on the banca, for cleaving coconut shells, chopping firewood, and performing many other duties.

Sailing away, except for the times we were back-tacking, Buckwheat's prow was pointing, or trying to point, south by a little east. We were aiming to pass just east of islands of Morotai and Halmahera, hoping to sail between the latter and the island of Waigeo off the northwest tip of New Guinea.

Two times we encountered Japanese ships. We Americans hit the deck, leaving only Max, Sperry, and Trench in sight as apparent fishermen. Left gratefully unmolested, we couldn't help wondering whether or not the Japanese thought it strange to see such a vessel so far out to sea—a banca was built for sailing only within sight of land. The first incident occurred 10 days and about 400 miles out, when a large camouflaged and well-armed Japanese merchant ship crossed our port bow one-half mile away. Two weeks later, an even closer call brought our hearts into our throats. A smaller Japanese freighter slowly crawled past our boat less than one-fourth mile across the water. Luckily it was near dusk; so perhaps they didn't see us.

Twenty-two busy but doubtful days had passed without even a glimpse of land. Buckwheat was already in terrible shape. With no sea anchors to lie her still, or oil to quiet the seas, the boat had taken a terrific pounding. As happens to inexperienced

sailors, keeping it close-hauled and trying to tack in a rough sea, we frequently were caught in irons and missed our stays. Even for the 2 days when the wind was abaft the beam and we were running free off the wind, Stein miscalculated at the sheets and tiller, causing the sails to jibe a couple of times. The result was a cracked gaff and ripped sail. During the squalls and storms when we were either gathering sternboard way or drifting aimlessly in unknown currents, our waterlogged compass wouldn't work. We were dreary and cold, and it was cloudy and sunless. We had no idea of our position. We were beginning to feel the stress and strain. Speculation among the crew only produced arguments—which we had to avoid.

**Land Ho!**

It was on the morning of July 8 that Kapp yelled through the mist, "Land Ahead!" "Land Ahead!"

We threatened him with all kind of punishment for this ill-timed joke, but he persisted and pointed to a small, hazy grayish cone jutting out of the water away off in the distance.

"Hooray! This is land! What is it? Where are we?"

What if it turned out to be Australia? Everyone was elated. Land at last!

The next afternoon a much more wonderful sight rewarded our prayers when we beheld the same cone, but this time we could see its base and even a large expanse of foothills off to the side. It stayed with us all day, and the next morning we made an estimate of the constantly growing mass of land and decided it was about 60 miles away. By nightfall it was easy to distinguish the golden sand of palm-lined shore. The tropical sea was now bluer in color, leading us to expect that we would be sailing right into some crystal-clear lagoon. The main question in our minds was: Had we made a good or a bad landfall?

I took the tiller from Lindahl at 9 o'clock. The rain had terminated, but the night was pitch dark. The entire crew, exhausted, had stretched out wherever they could and gone to sleep. Near midnight, the wild cries of jungle birds and the shrieks of monkeys indicated we were very near land, so I eased up on the sails and drifted toward shore on a dying breeze. I couldn't see a thing, but the lapping of the waves told me that shore was

*Map showing places mentioned in Sgt. Maslak's adventure at sea (U.S. Army photo)*

only a few yards away. I hove to, letting go and getting away the anchor for the first time since we started. By Biss's watch it was exactly midnight of July 10. One month from Mindanao. Land at last! But where we were we knew not. We would have to wait for morning and sunrise. Now it was sleep and rest.

## *The Rest of the Story:*

The disappointed sailors would soon learn that they were not in Australia but New Guinea, not far from Sansapor where they traveled for supplies. They had travelled approximately 650 miles, half way to their destination of Australia but an estimated 150 miles east of their designated route. Their adjusted course would ultimately land them on a tiny unnamed island situated between Waigeo and the southernmost tip of Halmahera. The island's owner, a Chinese, allowed them to spend 5 weeks in order to repair their boat and await favorable monsoon winds. While on the island which they called "Little Pam," a native missionary sent them kasavas, sago, and bananas. It was here, however, that the adventure ended on September 24, 1942, when the group was captured and sent to a Japanese prison camp in the Netherlands, East Indies.

While in prison, Corporal Irving A. Stein and Private First Class Stanley W. Kapp would fall victims of exposure, disease, and a starvation diet. Kapp died in January 1944, and Stein in July. (In 1985, barracks housing U.S. Army personnel in Hawaii were dedicated to the memory of Stein and Kapp.) Maslak would survive and be liberated in September of the same year. Although information is not available as to what happened to Captain George Lindahl and Sergeant J.D. Biss after their capture, records do indicate that both survived their imprisonment.

At the conclusion of World War II, a roll call was taken of the rest of the men who had served with Detachment 6, Second Signal Service Company:

Colonel Joe R. Sherr who was evacuated to Australia, served as the officer in charge of the Signal Intelligence Division, U.S. Armed Forces, Far East, from January to September 1943. While

on a liaison mission, he died on September 22 as a result of a plane crash near Calcutta, India. He was awarded the Legion of Merit, posthumously.

Lieutenant Colonel Howard W. Brown was assigned as an operations officer for the newly created Central Bureau of Brisbane, and was with the advance echelon of the intelligence organization when it accompanied General MacArthur's return to the Philippines.

Master Sergeant Eustace M. Messer, upon arrival in Australia, was transferred to the U.S. Army Services of Supply.

Sergeants Carl L. Card and John J. Phelan and Corporal Richard E. Nurss all received direct commissions due to their continued work with radio intelligence.

The exact fate of Lieutenant Daniel C. Gelb after the fall of Corregidor is unknown, but official Army records show him to have died in a Japanese prison camp in the Philippines in 1944.

Private First Class David H. Summons and Private Jay E. Bradbury also died in a Japanese prison camp. Tragically, so did Staff Sergeant Joseph Sarata when he was fatally struck in the head by foodstuffs being dropped from a U.S. plane during the liberation phase of reoccupation.

Lieutenant Berkley J. Kinkade, Staff Sergeant Lawrence M. Hall, and Sergeant Wayne R. Hightower all were found in prison camps at the end of the war.

Corporal James E. Rhen joined the guerrillas only to be killed by another American soldier who shot him in the back after a minor altercation.

Private First Class Paul A. Gill became a member of the stay-behind-guerrillas on the island of Mindanao. After surviving an almost fatal bout of malaria, Gill rose to the rank of lieutenant among guerrillas, finally being evacuated by submarine in March 1944.

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